

PATHWAY PLANNING



“INFORMING LEARNING,
BUILDING CONNECTIONS,
STRENGTHENING TRANSITIONS”
FINAL REPORT AND REVIEW

Peter Tatham & Joyce Johnston
University of Tasmania
May 2007

© Department of Education, Tasmania

ISBN 978-1-86295-395-6

This report is for the Tasmanian Department of Education.

This work is copyright. It may be reproduced in whole or in part for study or training purposes subject to the inclusion of the source and no commercial usage or sale.

The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Education.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	4
Executive Summary	6
Glossary	9
1 Background	11
2 Literature Review	14
3 Methodology	21
4 Findings	25
5 Discussion	57
6 Recommendations	70
7 References	71
Appendices	
Appendix A: Pathway Planning Officers' Survey	75
Appendix B: Principals' Survey	80
Appendix C: Call for Submissions	83
Appendix D: Results and comments from PPOs' Survey	84
Appendix E: Results and comments from Principals' Survey	92

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Project Team would like to thank the Reference Group members, and specifically wants to acknowledge the contribution made by the Pathway Planning Officers, Regional Development Officers and particularly Jennifer Castle, Kathy Cameron, Trudy Durkin and Kym Goodes. We would also like to thank the school principals and teachers who gave their valuable time to diligently and thoughtfully answer the Project Team's numerous questions.

We would also like to acknowledge the various staff in the office of Student Services at the University of Tasmania for their help with and interest in this project.

This project has been funded by the Tasmanian Department of Education.

UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA PROJECT TEAM

Chair	Tony Payne	Manager, Student Services, University of Tasmania
	Peter Tatham	Head, Career Development and Employment Service, University of Tasmania
	Dr Helen Mahoney	Senior Lecturer, School of Education, University of Tasmania
	Helen Bound	Coordinator Bachelor of Adult and Vocational Education
	Joyce Johnston	Project Officer

REFERENCE GROUP

Chair	Nick Evans	Manager Personalised Learning, Learning Services South, Department of Education
	Kathy Cameron	Principal Leader Pathway Planning
	Jenny Castle	Senior Project Officer Pathway Planning, Department of Education
	Roxanne House	Principal, Riverside High School, Launceston
	Kym Goodes	Guaranteeing Futures Manager, Launceston
	Kate Wilson	Pathway Planning Officer, Hobart

CONSULTANTS AND OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Jane Barrett	State Disability Liaison Officer, Tasmania
Rebecca Shaw	Student Services, University of Tasmania
Frances Wayman	Student Services, University of Tasmania

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pathway Planning is a key component of the State Government's Guaranteeing Futures program. Underpinning this program is a clear aim to improve educational outcomes for young Tasmanians and the broader community. Pathway Planning is progressively being rolled out over a three-year cycle which commenced in 2005 with Year 8 students. In 2006 the University of Tasmania was commissioned by the Department of Education to conduct a review of the early implementation of the Pathway Planning program from 2005 through to mid-2006. This report presents the findings of this research and identifies some positive strategies for enhancing the effectiveness of the program.

The aim of the review was to:

Review the range of approaches implemented during the first 18 months of operation of the Pathway Planning initiative

- Research ways of continually improving the Pathway Planning model
- Identify the most effective of these to inform the future development and evaluation of the project in subsequent years

The criteria that the review team used to measure the effectiveness to date of Pathway Planning were:

- Engagement by students
- Engagement by parents
- Engagement by schools
- Effectiveness of the Pathway Planning process
- Sustainability and equity of the program

The research was undertaken in two stages. The first involved a literature review and focus group discussions with Pathway Planning Officers (PPOs) which informed the development of survey instruments for both PPOs and school principals. The surveys were administered by email with response rates of 80% from PPOs and 15% from principals, and were then coded and analysed. The second stage was designed to gain further insight into how the program was operating in individual schools, and to identify examples of best practice. Discussions were held at ten schools, involving principals, Year 9 teachers, their students, and small groups of parents. The research team also held follow-up discussions with PPOs in each region.

The findings of this review are a positive endorsement of the progress of Pathway Planning and its consistency with the Guaranteeing Futures objectives "to assist students' transition from compulsory education to young adulthood" (Department of Education, Tasmania, 2003). The evidence indicates that the foundations for an effective pathway planning structure are being built in Tasmania. The review found that there is a high degree of commitment amongst PPOs, Department of Education staff and by students, and a useful range of resource materials informs and supports the Pathway Planning process.

The Project Team commends the Department of Education for instituting an ongoing review process to foster continuous quality improvement within the program, but the development of effective processes for evaluating Pathway Planning provides challenges. The benefits of Pathway Planning may emerge over many years and in ways that are difficult to clearly link to Pathway Planning, so strategies for evaluation must be implemented throughout the three-year Pathway Planning cycle and these strategies should also measure the impact on students after their graduation. These strategies may include ongoing action research, auditing of completed plans, student exit surveys and research into destinations of students completing plans. Opportunities also exist to consider

broader longitudinal surveys that may provide additional feedback to inform the future development of Pathway Planning. To facilitate such evaluation the objectives for the Pathway Planning program need to be more transparent so that they are more easily understood by students, teachers, parents and the broader community, and enable useful evaluation to be conducted.

At this stage of its development there is significant variability in the ways in which Pathway Planning has been implemented and integrated across the state. In part this has occurred because of a deliberate process by the Department during the implementation phase to actively encourage a range of approaches to pathway planning. To fully integrate a program of this complexity it needs to complete at least a further three-year cycle. However, there is an opportunity to learn from the many examples of good practice revealed by this research to improve the quality of Pathway Planning delivery overall. From the ten case studies the research team identified a number of elements of good practice.

- The principal and teachers value Pathway Planning and actively facilitate its integration into the school community.
- The school integrates Pathway Planning into its curriculum and recognises other programs (e.g. Real Game) as complementing and supporting Pathway Planning.
- The PPO is recognised as a key member of the school and is resourced in delivering the program.
- There is a strong commitment by the school to Guaranteeing Futures, student outcomes and student goals.
- The students are engaged in and understand the relevance of Pathway Planning to their future life learning and work decisions.
- The school invests in PD for its teachers to ensure the resources (learning sequences) are well understood and that its implementation is a priority.
- The PPO builds effective relationships across the school and the broader community and is available to students on a regular basis.

The review team noted that students who are at schools that have embraced the learning sequences are participating in a much richer experience than those that are at schools which are doing the minimum required. When principals and other leaders within the school community supported Pathway Planning it was more likely to be integrated into the school culture. Developing strategies to increase ownership of Pathway Planning within schools is likely to have a significant impact on the capacity of the program to achieve desired outcomes.

The review suggests that an induction program to engage with schools and their communities should be implemented to ensure that the Pathway Planning program is integrated into the life of the school community. There would also be great value in facilitating approaches that engage teachers and encourage them to contribute and add value to Pathway Planning particularly within their classroom teaching. Implementing additional processes for strengthening feedback to teachers needs further consideration. It was noted that where teachers were engaged there was also understanding about the merits of Pathway Planning. The level of parental engagement remains a challenge for all schools. Parents are critical stakeholders and contributors to students in the development of their plans. Additional strategies are required to improve current levels of both parental and teacher engagement with Pathway Planning and better integrate the program into the life of the school.

Research indicates the value of involving the broader community, especially business and industry, in Pathway Planning processes. There is potential for greater involvement by these external stakeholders to create a richer experience for students. The report recommends that the support of

key educational, community and business leaders should be recruited with a view to engaging them in current Pathway Planning implementation and in plans for its future development.

There is a need to consider greater flexibility in methods of delivery to address concerns about workload and ensure the work of the PPOs is challenging and cutting edge. Where PPOs concentrate on the plan rather than the skill development of the individual to build a plan it is likely that over time the value of Pathway Planning will be diluted. While the plan itself is one necessary outcome, the overall development of the individual through Pathway Planning is critical to the quality of the outcome.

PPOs are the key delivery point of Pathway Planning. However, there is a significant variation in the extent to which they feel adequately resourced to perform their tasks. To ensure effective and efficient program delivery PPOs need access to a minimum level of resources including access to a confidential meeting area, administrative support and a networked computer.

At present PPOs are from a range of vocational and educational backgrounds as are career development practitioners generally. This diversity of qualifications for PPOs is both a strength and potential weakness. Its strength is that it brings to the program a broad range of skills, experience and backgrounds but all users of such important services are entitled to a minimum standard of service by competent and trained practitioners. The report suggests that a comprehensive program of targeted professional development be implemented to ensure that PPOs develop a common set of knowledge, skills and a shared vision regarding the implementation of the Pathway Planning program

From a student perspective, support for Pathway Planning was very strong. And, given that students are the beneficiary of the program, this is an excellent beginning. However, a number of equity considerations emerged in relation to the diverse needs of students and the additional challenges faced by some schools, particularly those in rural and isolated areas. The difficulties associated with living in an isolated community or of having a disability, for instance, impact on the pathways that students might consider, and additional support is required to provide these students with equitable opportunities. The Project Team did not find evidence of a strong commitment to inclusive approaches to the implementation of Pathway Planning and greater attention will need to be given to implementing sustainable strategies for meeting the needs of various equity groups in the next stage of development of Pathway Planning.

The development of effective processes for evaluating Pathway Planning is a challenge and the benefits of Pathway Planning may emerge over many years and in ways that are difficult to directly link to Pathway Planning. For this reason Pathway Planning needs to be reviewed over a number of cycles. Clear objectives and performance indicators are necessary to facilitate benchmarking the ongoing impact of Pathway Planning. Opportunities also exist to undertake further research (e.g. longitudinal surveys) to inform the future development and provide a clearer understanding of the student experience of Pathway Planning, the skills being developed through participation in the program and to track student outcomes. The report recommends that additional research be conducted into both the contribution that Pathway Planning has on the student experience and on outcome indicators such as retention and employment success.

The Department of Education, together with Pathway Planning staff and schools, have done a remarkable job in building the foundations for an effective Pathway Planning structure. Schools that have embraced Pathway Planning also provide an encouraging glimpse of what is possible in terms of teacher and school engagement, and demonstrate the potential for Pathway Planning to become not only an integral component of learning in schools but one that sets a foundation for lifelong learning.

GLOSSARY

Best practice	Management practices and work processes that lead to outstanding or top-class performance and provide examples for others (Knight & Nestor, 2000, p. 9).
Career	A lifestyle concept that involves the sequence of work, learning and leisure activities in which one engages throughout a lifetime. Careers are unique to each person and are dynamic: unfolding throughout life. Careers include how persons balance their paid and unpaid work and personal life roles (Canadian National Steering Committee for Career Development Guidelines and Standards, 2004).
Curriculum	The specifications for a course or subject (module) which describe all the learning experience a student undergoes, generally including objectives, content, intended learning outcomes, teaching methodology, recommended or prescribed assessment tasks, assessment exemplars, etc. (Knight & Nestor, 2000, p. 13).
Employability skills	Generic skills and attributes that are required to gain employment and may be transferred from one situation to another (Miles Morgan Australia, 2003, p. 13).
Guaranteeing Futures	Guaranteeing Futures, an element of Tasmania: a State of Learning, is a strategic approach to meeting the needs of young Tasmanians in transition from compulsory education to independent young adulthood.
Genogram	A genogram is a pictorial display of a person's family relationships.
Learning	Learning is a holistic process involving thinking, feeling, perceiving and behaving as individuals relate with past experience and ongoing interaction with the world throughout their lives (Patton & McMahon, 2006).
Learning sequences	Resources provided as part of Pathway Planning packages.
Lifelong learning	All purposeful learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence (Commission of the European Communities, 2000).
My Plan for My Future	A resource for schools, developed by the Tasmanian Education Department, to support Year 8 and Year 9 students to engage in pathway planning.
Reference Group	The body overseeing the review of Pathway Planning comprising Department of Education and University of Tasmania representatives.
Pathway Planning	Pathway Planning is a key component of the State Government's Guaranteeing Futures program. Underpinning this program is a clear aim to improve educational outcomes for young Tasmanians and the broader community. Pathway Planning is progressively being rolled out over a three-year cycle which commenced in 2005 with Year 8 students.

Pathway Planning Officer (PPO)	PPOs provide planning and transition support for all Year 8–10 students in Tasmanian state high schools.
Real Game	The “Real Game” series is an Australian Government initiative that helps students undertake a range of practical hands-on activities such as role playing occupations, budgeting, paying tax, planning their leisure time, and creating the kind of communities they want to live in.
Review	The process or results of an assessment or appraisal in relation to stated objectives, standards or criteria; in vocational education or training may be applied to organisation, programs, policies, courses, etc. (Knight & Nestor, 2000, p. 13).
University Project Team	Representatives of the University of Tasmania involved in the Pathway Planning review.
VELDO	Vocational Education & Learning Development Officer, part of the Guaranteeing Futures team.
Work	A set of activities with an intended set of outcomes, from which it is hoped a person will derive personal satisfaction. It is not necessarily tied to paid employment. It can encompass other meaningful and satisfying activities through which an individual’s career develops, such as parenting or volunteering (Miles Morgan Australia, 2003, p. 14).
YLO	Youth Learning Officer, part of the Guaranteeing Futures team.
The Youth Participation in Education and Training (Guaranteeing Futures) Act 2005	An Act providing for the continuing participation of young persons in education and training after they attain the age of 16 years.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Pathway Planning is a key component of the State Government's Guaranteeing Futures program. Underpinning this program is a clear aim to improve educational outcomes for young Tasmanians and the broader community. Pathway Planning is progressively being rolled out over a three-year cycle which commenced in 2005 with Year 8 students.

In 2006 the University of Tasmania was commissioned by the Office of Post-Compulsory Education and Training (Department of Education) to conduct a review of the early implementation of the Pathway Planning program from 2005 through to mid-2006.

This report and review presents the findings of this research and identifies some positive strategies for enhancing the effectiveness of the program.

The aim of the review was to:

Review the range of approaches implemented during the first 18 months of operation of the Pathway Planning initiative

- Research ways of continually improving the Pathway Planning model
- Identify the most effective of these to inform the future development and review of the program in subsequent years

The review also aimed to provide a "snapshot" and a particular reference point of key aspects of Pathway Planning at this early stage of its development. It was thought that this snapshot would contribute to the ongoing quality enhancement of the program.

The report is divided into six sections. Section 1 outlines the background, objectives and context of the project and Section 2 contains a literature review. Section 3 details the methodology used. Section 4 contains the findings of the review. Section 5 discusses the emerging themes and implications of the findings and Section 6 provides recommendations for future development of Pathway Planning.

The findings of this report have been grouped simply, according to the four key topics addressed by the survey and discussion groups, together with a section summarising the common themes.

1.2 ORIGINS OF THE PATHWAY PLANNING PROGRAM

In 2004, after analysing data collected to determine the destinations of 2001 school leavers, the Office of Post-Compulsory Education and Training published *Early School Leaving in Tasmania: Origins and Outcomes*. This report concluded that young people were engaging in a range of training and education activities and that there was a need to formally recognise programs and opportunities outside of colleges deemed to be equivalent to completions of senior secondary programs.

The report suggested that policy-makers needed to provide a range of education and training options to students so that young Tasmanians could explore a range of pathways that might suit their differing interests and needs. The state wanted to develop a program that encouraged young people to engage in post-compulsory education and training and recognised that there were some young people who would best be accommodated outside the regular school system.

To this end the Tasmanian Government enacted *The Youth Participation in Education and Training (Guaranteeing Futures) Act 2005*. This legislation requires most young Tasmanians to participate in an education or training program until they have reached the age of 17 or achieved a Certificate III-level vocational qualification.

The goal of this legislation was to encourage young people to learn as much as possible before leaving formal education and training, and to cultivate the social, cultural and economic life of this state so that students will be better able to take advantage of life's opportunities.

This goal became the catalyst and then the cornerstone of the state's first strategy for post-Year 10 education and training and the focus of Guaranteeing Futures, one of four elements of Tasmania: A State of Learning, a strategy launched in 2004 to raise post-compulsory education levels in Tasmania, thereby building a more skilled workforce that will be able to support Tasmanian businesses.

Implementation of the four key elements encompassed in the State of Learning strategy began in 2004. These elements are: Guaranteeing Futures; Ensuring Essential Literacy, Enhancing Adult Learning; and Building Learning Communities.

The aim of Guaranteeing Futures is to meet the needs of students who are transitioning from compulsory education to independence. Guaranteeing Futures established the purpose, values and vision that now underpin post-Year 10 education and training. The aim of this program is to ensure that young Tasmanians "participate in education and training beyond Year 10" and to assist those young people to "plan, prepare and make informed choices about their post-school destination" (Department of Education, Tasmania, 2003).

One of the elements of the Act is Pathway Planning, which aims to ensure that students are able to select further learning and training options that will engage and reward them while they continue with their education. It is believed that this strategy will provide the support students require as they move through their schooling into pathways that hopefully will provide them with the best opportunities for their futures.

PPOs were employed by the Department of Education in 2005. They were placed in state high schools and began working with all Year 8 students on the development of individual pathway plans. The major material to support these tasks is an excellent set of resources under the title "My Plan for My Future".

Some schools began delivering curriculum materials that reinforced and enriched the work the students were undertaking with the PPOs at that time.

In 2006, Year 9 materials were delivered to schools and PPOs continued to work with the students who had begun their plans the previous year. As well, they continued to work with the new Year 8 students. In 2007 PPOs will begin working with the final installment of "My Plan for My Future" resource material when they begin work with the Year 10 students.

1.3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The specific aims of the project, contained in Schedule 1 of the contract from the Department of Education, were to:

- review the range of approaches implemented during the first year of operation of the Pathway Planning program
- research ways of continually improving the Pathway Planning model
- identify the most effective of these to inform the future development and review of the program in subsequent years. Provide strategies to demonstrate the value of the model

Suggestions for the evaluation criteria, to be developed by the project steering committee, included aspects of student engagement, integration by schools and teachers, curriculum (including equity issues and effectiveness of resource materials), satisfaction of PPOs and engagement of parents.

The review was to take an action research approach including a literature review, identification of relevant documents, interviews with key stakeholders, observation of key participants, focus groups, surveys and summation/reflection data.

1.4 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The University of Tasmania's Project Team comprised Tony Payne (Manager, Student Services), Peter Tatham (Head, Career Development and Employment Service), Dr Helen Mahoney (Senior Lecturer, School of Education) Helen Bound and Joyce Johnston who was appointed as the Project Officer.

A Reference Group was established, which included the following Department of Education members:

Nick Evans (Chair)	Director Policy and Services
Kathy Cameron	Principal Leader, Pathway Planning
Jenny Castle	Senior Project Officer, Pathway Planning
Roxanne House	Principal, Riverside High School
Kym Goodes	Guaranteeing Futures Manager, Launceston
Kate Wilson	Pathway Planning Officer, Hobart

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this literature review is to provide a context and background to support the understanding and importance of effective transition strategies. It begins with a brief look at international and national issues that link the role of transition programs to economic growth.

Making the transition from school to work and/or further study involves an increasingly complex range of decisions and processes for many young Tasmanians. They are faced with a broader range of learning pathways with multiple entry points and a labour market that has undergone significant restructuring over the past decade.

The simple pathways in evidence up until the 1980s of apprenticeships for early school leavers and training, employment or tertiary study for those who completed secondary school (Beavis, 2005) are now complicated by shifts in employer expectations and in the expectations of the students themselves, and most recently structural reform arising out of WorkChoices legislation (Australian Government, 2006). The implication is a greater responsibility and capacity for young people to understand and negotiate their own conditions of employment and to navigate and create a satisfying career.

Although many countries have not gone as far as Australia in labour market reform, it is clear that the expectation of how young people are prepared to make effective learning life and work transitions is changing.

Pathway Planning is underpinned by significant national and international studies recognising the importance of career development and transition support for school students, including a number of OECD studies (1996, 1997, 2004a and 2004b). The 2004 OECD Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap report highlights the link between effective career programs and their roles in relation to learning and active labour market policies. In other countries, and most notably in Europe, access to effective career services is recognised as being important across all life stages as a contributor to the development of an effective knowledge economy.

At the 2006 International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy the delegates reaffirmed the international definition of career development as encompassing services intended to assist people, of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make education, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. The delegates agreed that career development can play a central role in helping governments improve labour supply, address skill shortages, and raise the level and improve the quality of human capital.

Australia has clearly recognised that the future growth of the Australian economy is dependent on strengthening its human capital. To this end, the Committee of Australian Governments (CoAG) has recently adopted a number of recommendations in relation to the building of Australia's human capital to achieve an effective knowledge economy (CoAG, 2006). It endorsed:

A new national reform agenda to enhance workforce participation and productivity by building the nation's human capital. This agenda will enable more Australians to realise the potential, and that of the nation. It will have a major impact on the living standards of Australians, and generate significant dividends for the Australian economy. It is an agenda that is both good for people and good for the economy (CoAG communiqué, February 2006).

In February 2007 the Productivity Commission released its report on the potential benefits of the National Reform agenda (Productivity Commission, 2007). The report indicates a strong economic benefit from the implementation of effective transition programs. The report found that the two factors that play a critical role in transitions are educational attainment and labour market experience (Productivity Commission, 2007). In terms of educational attainment Australia needs to increase the proportion of students with at least secondary education completion rates.

It is estimated that an additional year of schooling increases the workforce participation rate by around 0.5% for males and 4% for females (Productivity Commission, 2007). The benefits of additional schooling, training or work experience accrue not only to the country and the state but to the individual. The commission report notes “that for every additional year of education, the earnings of an Australian worker increase by between 5.5% and 11.0%” (ibid, 2007). Improvements in transitions from school are likely to improve participation rates in the labour market by 0.37% and productivity increases of around 0.45%. This equates nationally to an increase in productivity of around \$1 billion.

The requirements of an effective career and transition system have been the subject of regular reports for many years. Several studies review the effectiveness of programs aimed at improving the transition of young people from secondary school to further study, training or work (Kellock, 2002; Allen Consulting Group, 2003; Alfred et al., 1998; Sears, 1995; Spierings, 2005). The studies show that young people leaving school early, without career paths, are likely to face long-term disadvantage by having higher levels of unemployment and part-time and casual work, shorter working lives, lowered incomes and the increased probability of finding themselves in jobs with poorer working conditions and fewer opportunities for advancement. The long-term implications of this can be higher levels of depression, low-quality housing and an increased chance of early pregnancy amongst young females. Furthermore, in relation to gender issues, Ford (2006) suggests that to broaden career options for women, career programs need to commence in early high school.

Nationally, MCEETYA (1999, 2000a) has provided clear statements for schools. The 1999 Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century stated that “when students leave school they should have employment-related skills and an understanding of the work environment, career options and pathways as a foundation for, and positive attitudes towards, vocational education and training, further education, employment and lifelong learning” (MCEETYA, 1999, Goal 1.5).

The Prime Minister's Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce Report in 2001 recommended that for young people to achieve independence they require among other things “the development of learning pathway plans for each young person, transition follow-up mechanisms and transition indicators; and the development of a comprehensive career and transition support system and the development of lifeskill learning programs” (Prime Minister's Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce, 2001). In line with these recommendations, a 2004 Senate inquiry into vocational education in schools recommended that careers education be a mandatory part of the core curriculum for the compulsory years of secondary schooling (House Standing Committee on Education, 2004).

Over the next few years governments will increasingly turn their attention to transition issues in relation to the declining growth in the Australian labour market. Trends already in place will mean that from 2014 growth in Australia's working age population will fall from around 166,000 per year to 190,000 for the entire decade (Access Economics, 2006). The young people facing this labour market are currently in primary school and early high school. The need for these students to make well-informed learning, life and work choices is critical for themselves and for the state.

What is of concern is the number of young people who fail to make a successful transition. In 1998 Sweet estimated that more than 15% of young people aged 15–19 failed to make a successful transition. McClelland, Macdonald & MacDonald point out that the 78,200 15–19-year-olds who were unemployed and not studying in 1996 were matched by another 67,800 who were in part-time work but not studying and another 41,700 who were neither studying nor in the labour market (cited in Sweet, 1998),

The OECD report *Education at a Glance* (2005) indicates Australia has achieved only a small drop (about 1.5%) in the number of students failing to make a successful transition (OECD, 2005).

Research indicates that students in Years 8–10 go through processes of “compromise in their occupational aspirations and expectations” (Herr et al., 2004). Studies by Gottfredson (1981, 1996) and Armstrong & Crombie (2000) point to the value of information and support at this time to assist students to connect their personal interests and abilities with actual occupational characteristics and requirements.

Tasmania is already behind the national average in relation to retention within the education and training system. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2001–2005) consistently shows that Tasmania has the highest proportion of all people who failed to attain a post-Year 10 qualification and a rate of participation by 15–19-year-olds in all education which is below the national average.

The choices that many young people are making are not focused on further education and/or training choices and as a consequence are likely to impact not only on their future but on the availability of a skilled and well-educated workforce in the state.

This poor participation in education and training means that the Tasmanian workforce has the lowest skill base of all Australian states. The enactment of the Youth Participation in Education and Training Act is therefore a key strategy for meeting a number of policy challenges and ensuring that young people are able to make the most of life’s opportunities.

In presenting an overview of some of the economic and policy challenges it is important to recognise that the central beneficiary of career and transition programs is the individual. This point is recognised in the Guaranteeing Futures strategy and by most career programs (Council of the European Union, 2004b).

2.1 INFORMING PATHWAY PLANNING – A BRIEF LOOK AT KEY ELEMENTS AND EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE

In a review of this length it is possible to undertake only a very broad scan of practice and include studies to illustrate issues that link to Pathway Planning implementation and integration concerns.

Central to an effective Pathway Plan is a need for a strengthening of the skills required for students to make informed choices. These skills are often described as career management skills (OECD, 2004a), personal management skills (Miles Morgan Australia, 2003) or career planning skills. Whatever the nomenclature, the clear aim according to the OECD report (2004a) is that services focus on developing these skills.

In 1997 the Canadian province of Quebec established the concept of “The Guidance Oriented School” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1999). The program begins in elementary school and runs through to college. It recognises that many students lack motivation because of a lack of self-understanding and career goals. At its hub is the Personal Education Plan (PEP) which is an important reflective tool for students. The program itself takes an integrated approach to Pathway Planning that is embedded in all aspects of the learning within schools.

In Western Australia the Employment Directions Network, which operates the Parents as Career Partners program and School Leavers program amongst others, is regarded by practitioners in that state as taking a leading edge approach to career development. A matrix of services and programs available to schools has been developed and programs have been mapped to the Australian Blueprint for Career Development. The Australian Blueprint for Career Development provides a useful framework for the development of resources and activities that link to Pathway Planning (Miles Morgan Australia, 2003). Specific resources and training have been developed for indigenous students (EDN, 2006).

2.2 MAKING GOOD CAREER, LIFE, LEARNING AND WORK DECISIONS

At the heart of effective transitions is an understanding of decision-making and the elements of good career decision-making.

Dahir (2001) observes that career planning establishes a focus for achievement and helps middle-level students identify the strategies and tasks necessary to achieve their goals. It serves to guide them in making decisions about academic preparation, work experience, and the education and training necessary after high school to make a successful transition to the career path of their choice.

Issues related to work are of particular importance to young Tasmanians. In a recent national survey of young Australians (Mission Australia, 2006) 31.5% of Tasmanian respondents highly valued getting a job compared to 20.3% nationally. This result was consistent across all age categories. Feeling needed and valued was significant to 36.8% of young adults compared to only 21% of those aged 11–14 years. Peer acceptance was also more highly valued by young Tasmanians than their national counterparts (17.5% compared to 4.4%). Bullying, emotional abuse, alcohol and other drug issues and depression were issues of major concern. In all, 30% of 11–14-year-olds identified coping with stress as a major concern.

The context in which career and learning decisions are made cannot be ignored. In their Systems Theory of career development Patton & McMahon (2006), build on their earlier work in relation to adolescent decision-making. Systems Theory examines the “interconnections between internal and external variables that have an impact on people’s career development”. Their framework describes the influences on the decision-making process by recognising the individual as the central system, encompassing many subordinate systems (including differential factors such as interests, skills, values, age, etc.), and surrounded by systems representing contextual influences (e.g. the family, educational institutions, the employment market, etc.). “In practical terms, individuals seeking career development assistance are viewed within the contexts of their lives; in turn, individuals are viewed as active agents for influencing their surrounding contexts” (Arthur & McMahon, 2005).

The notion of an individual constructing a career that is personally meaningful and self-managed is reflected in Systems Theory and in constructivist and social constructivist approaches to career counselling (Savickas, 1997, 2000; Peavy, 1998; Brott, 2004). Constructivist approaches have been widely adopted by career practitioners in Australia and elsewhere. Constructivist notions are also evident in the resource material supporting Pathway Planning.

In a constructivist approach, the focus is on the individual student’s subjective personal narrative or life story and the approach often involves exploring a range of life roles and steps required to achieve a preferred life story. Brott (2005) puts forward a number of techniques to assist with exploration including life-space maps and genograms. Developing information that supports constructivist approaches is regarded as important (Grubb, 2002) but not without a word of caution. Practitioners are often assigned 500–1,000 students and assumptions can be made “that students have the constructs or schema to organise facts and the understanding why certain types of learning might be important to them” (Grubb, 2002). Recently, there has been some criticism of constructivist approaches in relation to a need for a greater balance between the subjective exploration and the realities of the labour market.

McMahon & Watson (2005) conducted a study exploring what children believe they need to find out about jobs. In total, 511 South African and 372 Australian children participated in the study. The study revealed that the nature of information the children needed to find out was related to life/career implications and life/career management tasks and to a lesser extent to interests and personal characteristics and the nature of work.

Beavis (2005) found that students are confused about the educational requirements of occupations. About 25% of young people surveyed for the Smith Family's Learning for Life program were planning a level of education too low for them to obtain their preferred job. All of these young people were from low socio-economic backgrounds and had planned futures that were shaped by their interests and perceived abilities. About 60% of students agreed that it was worth it to attend university.

In another study Beavis & Curtis (2005) examined the educational and occupational plans and aspirations of young people in Years 10, 11 and 12 who were participants in the Smith Family's Learning for Life program. They found that while most students in Years 10–12 appear to have vocational plans in place, around 30% appear to remain undecided and that the proportion of students aspiring to higher level jobs is higher than the proportion of jobs in the market, and the proportion of students aspiring to lower level jobs is lower than the proportion of these jobs in the labour market.

2.3 STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Understanding the cultural and social context in which young people's career interests develop needs consideration in the development of effective transition interventions (Turner & Lapan, 2003). These authors raise the question whether students from low socio-economic backgrounds might perceive the world of work in different ways from other students.

Hughes & Trang (2005) look at the notions of collectivism and individualism and the cultural inappropriateness of individualistic approaches to students from particular backgrounds in which family and other groups are key components of the career decision-making process.

There is a wide body of research available on career development for students with a disability and much of it is available at the Australian Disability Clearing House on Education and Training (<http://www.adcet.edu.au/>). In Tasmania the Atelier review (Atelier Learning Solutions, 2004) concluded that while best practice in inclusive education occurs in some schools, it is far from universal across all government schools. The findings of this report suggest an ongoing need to monitor and ensure inclusive practices are part of any school program.

Experiential learning programs also have positive outcomes in facilitating career aspirations. Smith & Green (2005) found that student engagement with workplaces influenced their post-school pathways and their choices in both work and study.

Another case study (McIlveen et al., 2005) describes a career education program that engaged rural secondary school students with the experience of university. The residential experience program included learning exercises for career exploration, attending university, and social experiences related to living in a city. Evaluation indicated that rural schools and students have engaged with the program, and that there was tentative evidence indicative of a positive impact on the participants' career aspirations and decision-making.

2.4 RETENTION

Building on a number of studies in North America and Europe, Careers Scotland (2002) points to the positive contribution of career-related interventions to educational attainment and retention. The research found that there is clear and systematic evidence that school pupils with career goals have higher attainment levels than those without. They found that "those students with clear goals are more ambitious regarding personal qualifications than those without career goals" (ibid., p. 32).

2.5 PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Parents are very influential in the career and learning decisions of their children. Developing effective strategies to improve the level of parental engagement is critical to an effective Pathway Planning process. These can range from improving online resources for parents, specific workshops and piloting special initiatives. For example, Bedson & Perkins (2006) describe an evaluation of an innovative education program for parents of secondary school children. Parents As Career Transition Supports (PACTS) aims to empower parents to better support their children's transitions from school to further education and/or work by building their knowledge of today's job market and post-school pathways. The project was conducted by the Brotherhood of St Laurence on the Mornington Peninsula. A survey of secondary students showed that a majority would like help from their parents when making the decision about what to do after leaving school.

In an earlier study (Hargrove et al., 2005) of 123 high school students analysis revealed that the quality of family relationships (i.e. degree to which family members are encouraged to express feelings and problems) played a small, yet significant role in predicting career planning attitudes of adolescents.

In the UK, Connexions Direct provides a hotline to access career information and other information to do with health, career and wellbeing. This service is increasingly being used by parents (Turner, 2006). A national career helpline similar to Connexions Direct was also a recommendation in the OECD review of career development in Australia (OECD, 2002).

The Western Australian Department of Education has identified in its report (Turner, 2006) several initiatives to improve the level of parental engagement ranging from workshops to home-based resource kits.

2.6 TEACHER ENGAGEMENT

Chen (2005) looked at ways of teacher collaboration to improve access to career services. This article stresses the need for curriculums with relevant content materials and a common understanding between the career counsellor and the teachers involved, and the need to improve and then maintain communication channels between the two partners.

At the Iowa Department of Education teachers are required to have a career development plan as part of overall district career development plans (Iowa Department of Education, 2004). The attractiveness of this approach is that teachers begin to mirror the planning process that students undergo as part of their career development.

One problem identified by Myrick & Carrow (1987) is that many teachers perceive themselves as lacking the knowledge and skills necessary to be effective in career education and advice.

2.7 PROGRAM EVALUATION

Hayslip & VanZandt (2000) describe several national standards and models of excellence, and demonstrate how Maine and New Hampshire in the USA, have integrated these standards and models into their recommendations to school counselling programs for developing and implementing comprehensive career development programs. Emphasis is placed upon three factors: curriculum integration, guidance program evaluation, and accountability to school and community.

An earlier study by Evans & Burck (1992) found from an examination of 67 studies that a positive gain in academic achievement was produced when students were provided with career education interventions as compared to situations in which students were not provided with career education. It also found that results increase in the second year of operation with the same students; however, the average number of hours for a successful intervention is quite high.

Careers Scotland uses a mix of evaluation tools including interviews and surveys with individuals, parents and employers. More recently, it has implemented evaluation of impact measures including learning outcomes from career planning and related services (e.g. learning about the demands of jobs or about self-awareness); the changes or decisions which individuals may make following their learning experience (e.g. application to a course at college); and the sustainability and robustness of that decision over time (e.g. that they complete the course) (Careers Scotland, 2007).

3. METHODOLOGY

A number of qualitative and quantitative data collection strategies were implemented and the research for this review was undertaken in two main stages.

The first stage commenced with a literature review and discussions with a small number of PPOs from each region. The outcome of these discussions was the Reference Group's approval of the criteria that would inform the review. These criteria informed the development and administration of two survey instruments, one for PPOs, and a second similar instrument for principals of schools where PPOs are currently working. The Review Team also called for public submissions statewide through newspapers, letters to key stakeholders, a web page and school newsletters. Analysis of the survey data was the final step in the first stage.

The second stage began with focus groups with the PPOs held in all three regions. Information provided from the analysed surveys and the regional focus group discussions then informed a detailed investigation of ten schools statewide. These case studies are broadly representative of the state, as they include schools from urban, rural and regional areas with a range of socio-economic characteristics.

3.1 CRITERIA AND INDICATORS

The criteria used to measure the effectiveness of Pathway Planning to date were: engagement by students, parents and schools; effectiveness of the Pathway Plan and implementation process; and sustainability and equity of the program.

For each of these criteria a number of indicators were identified:

1. Engagement by students
 - participation of students
 - plan completion rates
 - engagement of students and student ownership of plan
 - satisfaction of students with process
2. Engagement by parents
 - ways in which parents have been engaged in the process
 - understanding by parents of the purposes and methodology
 - perceived value and relevance to parents
3. Engagement by schools
 - ways in which teachers have been engaged in the process
 - extent to which the teachers and principals value the program
 - teachers' understanding of the program as a Guaranteeing Futures initiative
 - impact of Pathway Planning program on school processes and organisation
4. Effectiveness of the Pathway Plan and process
 - extent to which Year 8 plan informed Year 9 choices and emerging post-school plans
 - usefulness of resource materials
 - aspects that students (and other stakeholders) found useful and those they found less useful

5. Sustainability and equity of the program

- efficiency and effectiveness of strategies adopted by PPOs
- inclusiveness in relation to students with special needs
- extent to which role of PPOs is accepted and supported by each school
- extent of integration into curriculum framework
- extent of integration with community and work-based learning activities
- engagement and perceived relevance by the community

3.2 SURVEYS OF PPOS AND SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Considerable time was spent on developing an effective survey instrument for PPOs. The review needed to capture the variety of approaches being trialled and gain some insight into best practice and identify any emerging issues for further investigation.

The Project Team spoke to a small group of PPOs from each region to ascertain how they felt the project should be reviewed and what the markers of success should be. Suggested questions were then reviewed by the larger Reference Group and survey instruments for both PPO and principals were developed. Regional coordinators were involved in the next stage of survey development and a final draft was approved by the Reference Group.

The design of the principals' survey instrument was based on that for the PPOs with questions adjusted where necessary in recognition of role and knowledge differences.

Surveys incorporated both open-ended and Likert scale questions and contained four sections. The first enquired about how students' plans are developed; the second included questions about the engagement of students, parents and other stakeholders; the third explored outcomes; and the fourth was about the PPOs themselves, their impressions of the program and directions for further improvements. A complete copy of the surveys used may be found in Appendices A and B at the end of this report.

The surveys were distributed to participants via email and completed surveys were coded and analysed.

3.3 CALL FOR PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

It was agreed by the Reference Group that the broader community should be provided with the opportunity to provide comments to the Project Team regarding the early implementation of Pathway Planning in Tasmania. Advertisements calling for submissions were placed in newspapers statewide and letters inviting submissions were sent to interested stakeholders. The University developed a web page that included the terms of reference and contact details so that any interested members of the public could easily submit comments. No submissions were received.

3.4 FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups held with PPOs in the three regions were designed to gain further insight into how the Pathway Planning program was operating in schools and focus on the future of the Pathway Planning initiative. The discussions incorporated hypothetical questions to guide them. The aim was to generate conversations around the topic rather than a question-and-answer format. The questions were paraphrased so that the flow of the conversation could be maintained and areas of interest that emerged during the discussion could be explored. The goal was to gather examples of good practice, identify themes and explore the range of views, rather than develop a consensus in relation to Pathway Planning.

Following the regional focus groups with PPOs, a series of discussions and interviews were held at ten high schools, each providing a case study involving a principal, Year 9 teachers and their students, and a small group of parents.

3.5 CASE STUDIES OF TEN SCHOOLS

In order to obtain a representative sample of schools, Guaranteeing Futures regional managers were asked to nominate a number of schools in their regions and ten participating schools were chosen from that list as case studies. Australian Bureau of Statistics data was then consulted to ensure that there was a representative mix of differing socio-economic climates, as well as urban, rural and isolated populations. Based on these criteria, five schools from the South, three from the North and two from the North West were selected.

At each of the schools interviews were to be carried out with the principal, the PPO, up to five Year 8 and 9 teachers, up to ten Year 9 students, and up to five parents of Year 9 students. Appointments were made to allow a 30-minute interview with the principal at each of the schools. Because of the difficulty in arranging appointments with both teachers and students, interviews were conducted in either small groups or individually, whichever could most easily be accommodated. It was only possible to schedule discussions with parents at six of the schools.

Discussions with principals and teachers began with an overview of the research project and findings to date. A set of questions guided the discussion groups, but because of the vast differences in the implementation of Pathway Planning at different schools, questions were changed accordingly to reflect these differences. The discussion groups lasted between 30 minutes and one hour. They were recorded and subsequently transcribed.

The discussions with students required a number of approaches in view of individual differences between schools. Questions ranged from “What have you learned from working on your learning plan?” to “What will you be doing after Year 10?”; and from “Have you changed what you thought you might be doing after Year 10 because of what you have discovered about yourself?” to “Do you discuss your learning plan with your parents?”.

The data was analysed to identify key themes that emerged. The aim was not to develop a consensus view of attitudes towards Pathway Planning but to explore the range of views.

Schools chosen to participate in the case studies were:

NORTH-WEST

- Rosebery High School, which is in an isolated mining town with a lower socio-economic status; the school has 176 students and is 140 kilometres from Burnie.
- Reece High School, which is one of two urban high schools located in Devonport. It has 678 students.

NORTH

- Prospect High School, which is in a southern suburb of Launceston and has 703 students.
- St Marys High School, which is in a predominantly mining and fishing town isolated on the North-East coast; the school is attended by 196 students who represent a wide socio-economic cross-section.
- Port Dalrymple High School, which is only 30 minutes geographically from Launceston but that distance belies the substantial differences the 262 students at Port Dalrymple experience. The town is considered isolated and economically depressed.

SOUTH

- Triabunna High School, which has 178 students and is located in a small, isolated fishing and forestry community about 1 hour and 20 minutes from Hobart on the East Coast.
- Huonville High School, which has 437 students with diverse socio-economic and is 42 kilometres from Hobart. A total of 15% of its student population identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- Ogilvie High School is unique within the state education system in being dedicated exclusively to the education of girls. It is the largest Grade 7–10 high school in Tasmania, with 1,086 students, and is located in an older suburb of Hobart close to the city centre
- Rose Bay High School, which is located on Hobart's eastern shore and has 583 students. The school services the suburbs of Bellerive, Lindisfarne, Cambridge, Montagu Bay, Warrane, Rosny and Mornington; these suburbs represent an extremely diverse socio-economic area.
- New Norfolk High School, located 40 minutes from Hobart in a rural area with a mix of industries. The school has 344 students.

4. FINDINGS

Pathway Planning is being implemented across a culturally diverse educational environment. It is an environment in which the level of commitment and priority given to the initiative varies widely. Pathway Planning is therefore being delivered in multiple ways that vary from school to school and from PPO to PPO.

4.1 PPOS' AND PRINCIPALS' SURVEY FINDINGS

PPOs were keen to be involved in the research and contribute to the development of the program. Of the 36 surveys sent to PPOs, 28 were completed and returned. This represents an 80% response rate. However, the response from school principals was more variable. Of the 65 school principals surveyed only 13 responded, a 15% response rate.

The majority of responses by principals indicate that their school is being supported very well or moderately well to develop an understanding of Pathway Planning. The bar charts refer to PPO survey findings and the pie charts indicate findings from the principals' survey.

STUDENT APPOINTMENTS

Respondents were first asked about the processes that were in place to enable them to work with students on their Pathway Plan. PPOs report that student appointments are scheduled through teachers or administrative staff and same-day appointments are well-attended. However, as PPOs are not in the school on a full-time basis, appointments made between 24 hours and one week ahead are affected by student absenteeism, resulting in missed opportunities for the student and the PPO.

Over 80% of PPOs report meeting with students in pairs and 50% say that they sometimes meet with students individually as well.

All PPOs agreed that an adequate working environment is an important requirement for quality Pathway Planning. Meeting locations vary from school to school with 60% of PPOs reporting having their own office to work in. However, 40% of PPOs worked in shared spaces and some reported having filled out plans on their knees in small office spaces that the students don't have access to, on park benches, in vestibules or outside at a table.

Some PPOs reported that students who are looking for part-time work or support in preparing a CV often sought assistance between appointments and a lack of computer resources for these students to use was sometimes an issue.

PPOs were asked to state the ideal number of sessions needed to complete a Year 8 and Year 9 plan and their responses are shown in Figures 1 and 2. While 20 respondents said that one session per term was sufficient for a Year 8 plan, this number fell to 15 for Year 9 plans.

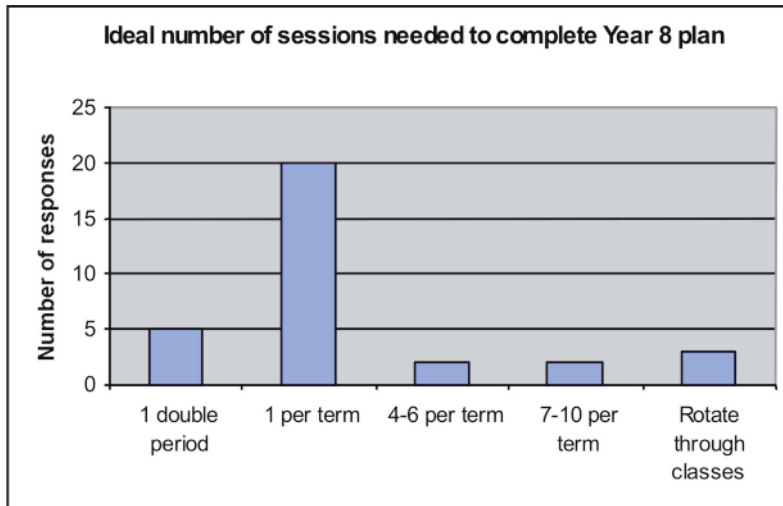


Figure 1: Ideal number of sessions needed to complete Year 8 plan

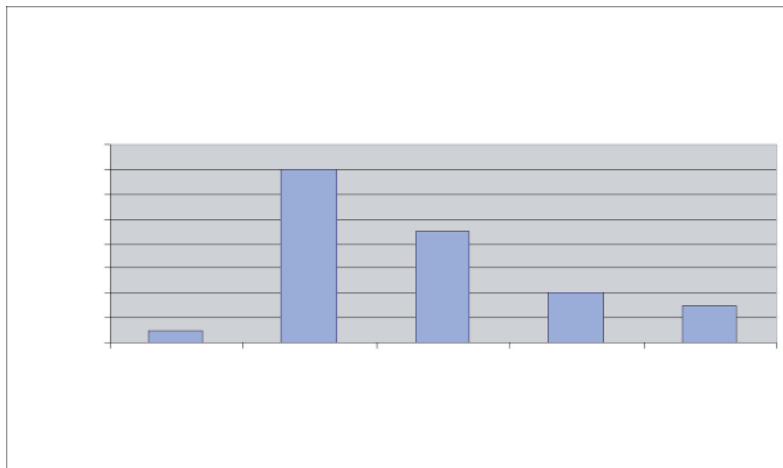


Figure 2: Ideal number of sessions needed to complete Year 9 plan

The majority of PPOs surveyed said that the optimum number of meetings is three per year to complete a plan but they almost all report that they require the flexibility to meet more or less often according to individual needs.

TOOLS

Most PPOs use a range of materials to develop plans for both Year 8 and Year 9 students. Thirteen report that conversations are the most effective tool to building an effective Pathway Plan.

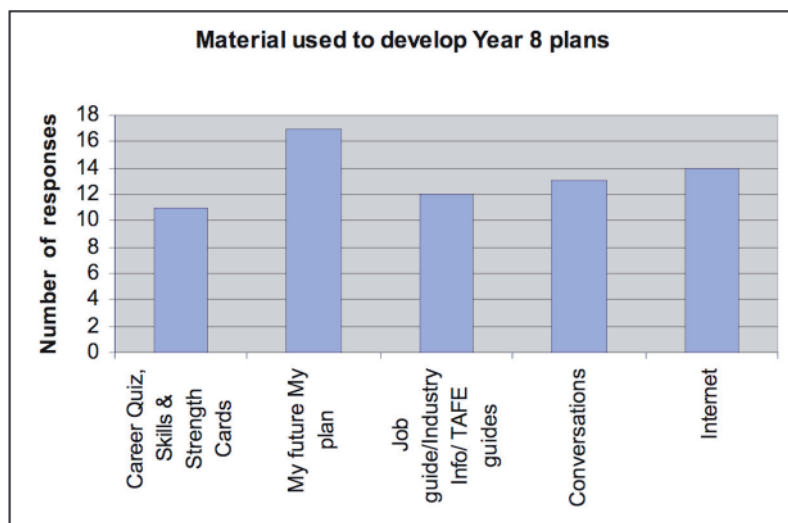


Figure 3: Material used to develop Year 8 plans

Figure 3 illustrates responses regarding the development of Year 8 plans: of the 28 planners who responded, 11 report using tools such as Career Quiz, and Skills and Strengths cards, 17 use the “My Plan for My Future” resource, 12 use the Job Guide, Industry Pathway Information and TAFE guides, and 14 actively use the Internet. The survey allowed for multiple responses.

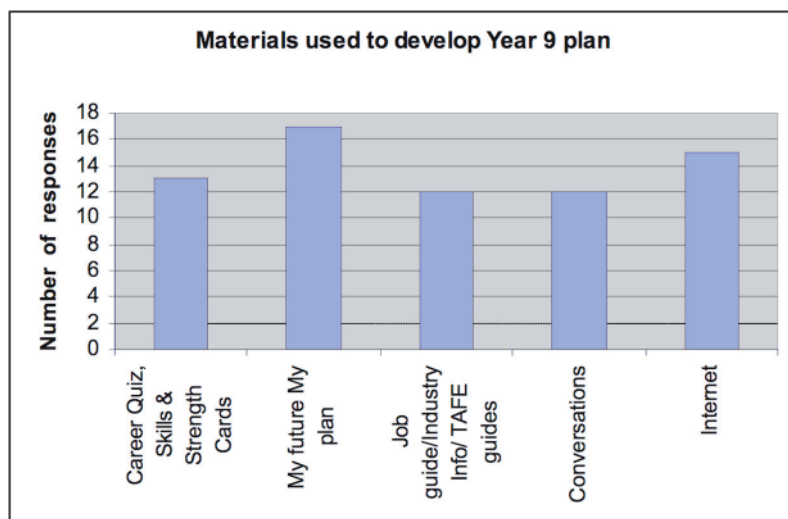


Figure 4: Materials used to develop Year 9 plans

To create Year 9 plans, 13 of the 28 respondents reported using Career Quiz, Skills and Strengths cards, 17 use “My Plan for My Future”, 12 use job guides, industry pathway information, and 15 use the internet (see Figure 4 above).

A Likert scale was used to measure how effective PPOs consider the resource material to be, in relation to both Year 8 and Year 9.

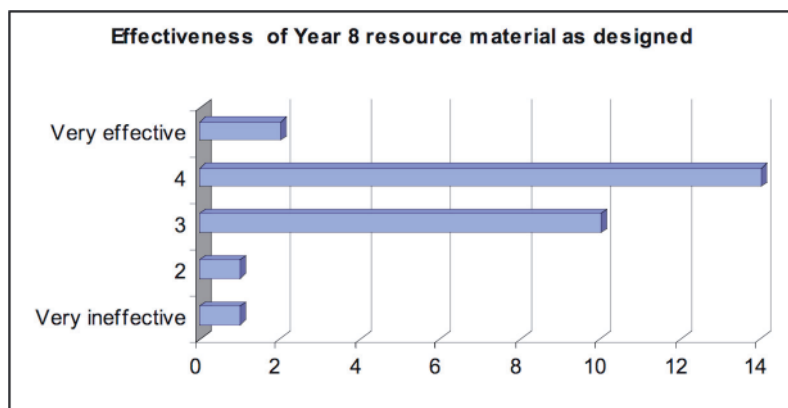


Figure 5: Effectiveness of Year 8 resource material as designed

Of the 28 PPOs who returned completed surveys, the majority consider the Year 8 resource material as designed to be effective (see Figure 5).

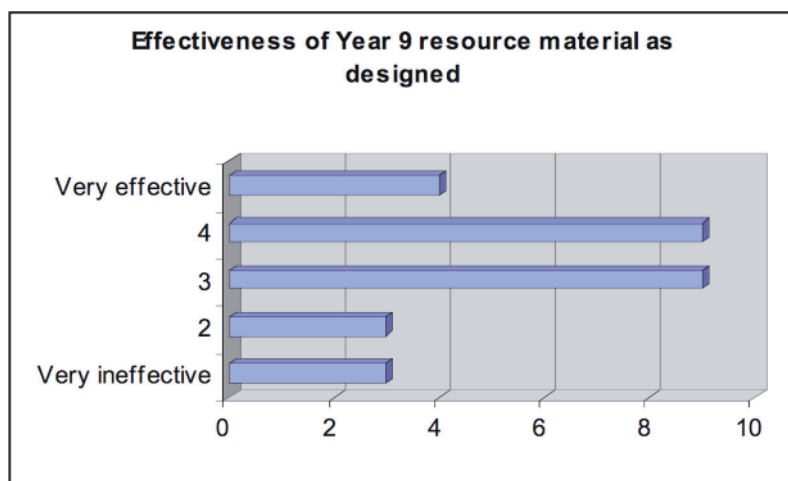


Figure 6: Effectiveness of Year 9 resources as designed

Of the 28 respondents, nine considered the Year 9 resource material as designed to be effective, and nine considered it to be neither ineffective nor effective (Figure 6).

All but one of the principals surveyed indicated that Pathway Planning had made a positive impact in their school; the principal who did not share this view believed it was too early to determine what the effect had been.

“There are bits of evidence starting to be seen that pathway planning is working. Students are more comfortable with the questions because the door to the future has been opened” (High School Principal, 2006)

“It has been suggested by one of the year coordinators at Rose Bay High that this year’s Year 9 students seem to have made more informed study choices” (feedback from interviews)

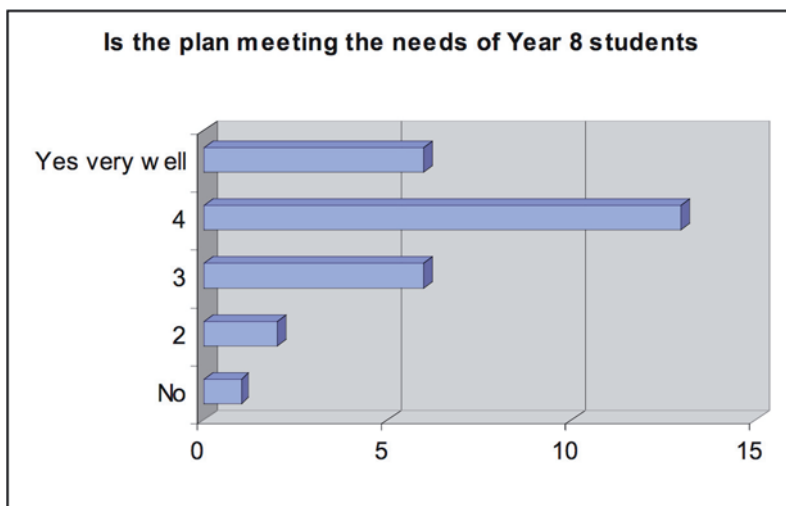


Figure 7: Is the plan meeting the needs of Year 8 students?

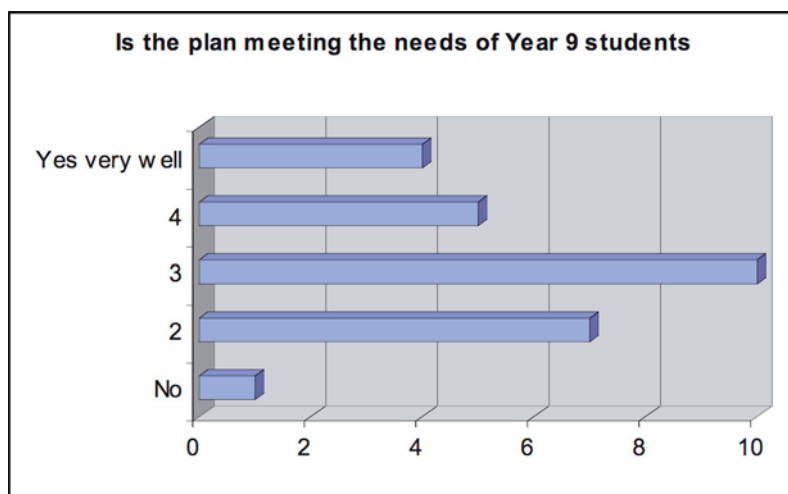


Figure 8: Is the plan meeting the needs of Year 9 students?

The majority of PPOs who responded felt the plan was more effective in meeting the needs of Year 8 students than Year 9 students (see Figures 7 and 8 above). Some of the common concerns of PPOs in relation to this are highlighted in the comments below:

“We need to be careful that it doesn’t become death by pathways. The plan needs to be kept relevant – some of the areas on the Grade 9 plan turn kids off straightaway” (PPO)

“Particularly in Grade 9, having to produce the Vision as an end product means I am unable to spend much if any time addressing and supporting the current needs of students e.g. finding part-time work. Many students are not greatly future-oriented in Grade 9 and it may be more useful and meaningful to engage them in activities and learning which they are immediately concerned with” (PPO survey response).

ENGAGEMENT

The Engagement sections of both the PPOs’ and principals’ surveys were designed to collect information on how well students are engaging with the program, as well as how much involvement parents, teachers and the schools themselves have had.

The response from principals indicated that time and a lack of understanding of the learning sequences were problems that need to be addressed to improve levels of engagement. Few had made structural or organisational changes to accommodate Pathway Planning. However, most respondents had communicated to parents by newsletters or through parent evenings and association meetings.

A more wide-ranging response was provided by PPOs.

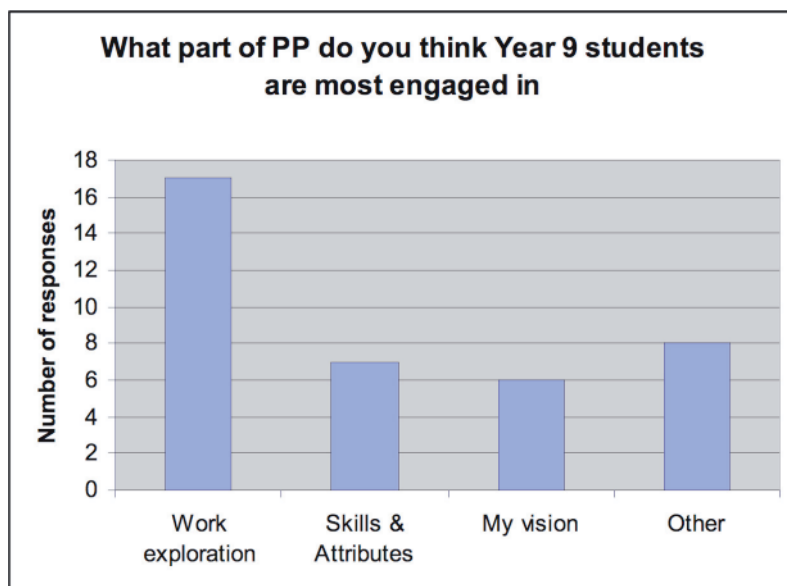


Figure 9: What part of Pathway Planning do you think Year 9 students are most engaged in?

The majority of the PPOs who responded indicated that work exploration was the task in which Year 9 students are most engaged.

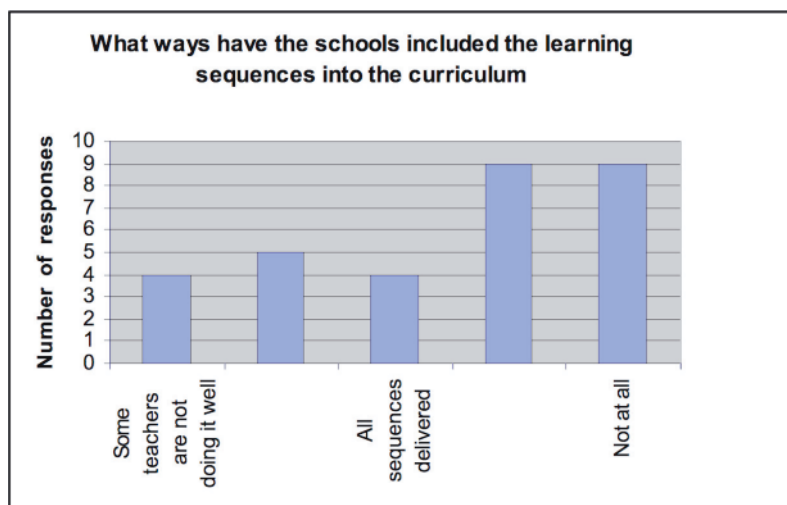


Figure 10: In what ways have schools included the learning sequences in the curriculum?

The majority of respondents felt that schools were including only a few sequences in the curriculum, or not at all (Figure 10).

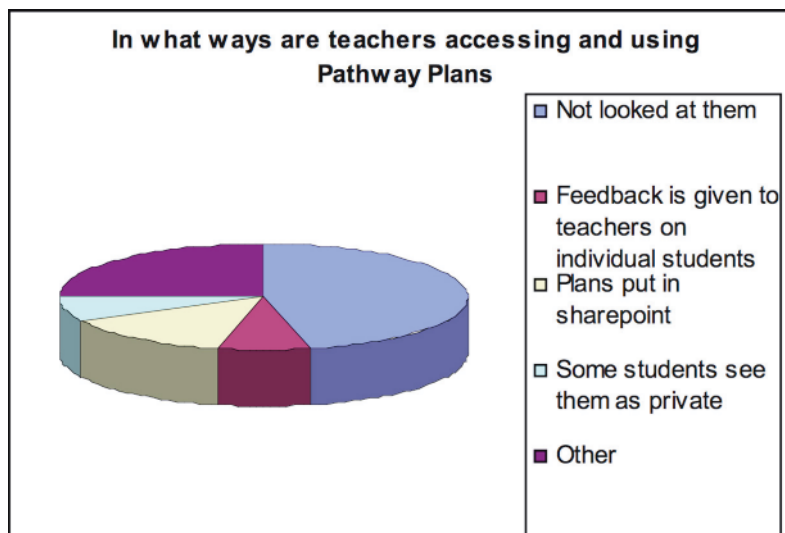


Figure 11: In what ways are teachers accessing and using Pathway Plans?

The vast majority also felt that teachers are not accessing and using Pathway Plans (Figure 11).

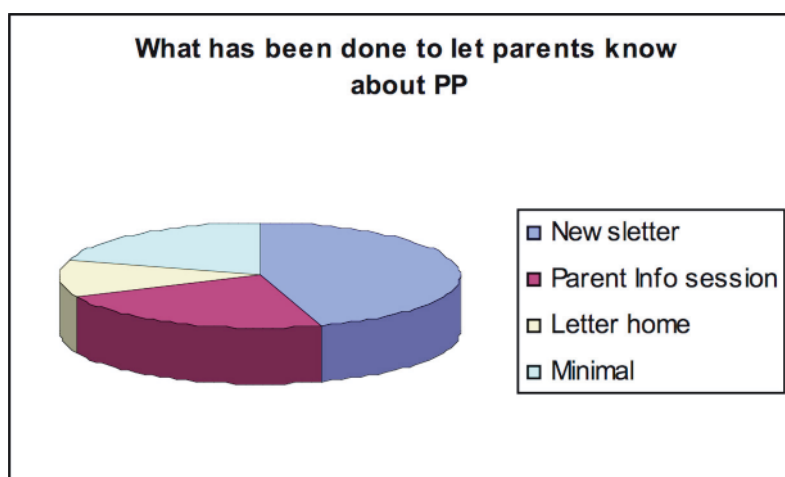


Figure 12: What has been done to let parents know about Pathway Planning?

The most common means by which principals report advising parents about Pathway Planning was through a school newsletter (Figure 12).

One of the pivotal questions used in the survey of PPOs was:

“If there are any barriers you face in engaging students in a meaningful ongoing Pathway Planning process can you explain what those are?”

The majority of responses revolved around four key concerns. PPOs are concerned about a lack of support from the school; about the attitude of students and a lack of understanding by the students; about a lack of tools (including computers); and about an excessive workload and time constraints.

“If we get teachers to believe in what we are doing, the rest will take care of itself” (PPO)

The comments below illustrate some of these concerns.

“Lack of involvement, support and promotion of Pathway Planning by the school. This limits students seeing the relevance of Pathway Planning and developing understanding of the concepts underlying the plan. Consequently this limits my ability to develop a meaningful process and plan the document with them. In my situation the one or two sessions students have with me are the beginning and end of Pathway Planning for that year.”

“I think that the longer the plan is the more tedious it becomes to the students – especially if there is no curriculum happening in the background to support the plan. Not having permanent internet connection is a barrier – as is not having a room because it seems that the program isn’t valued and I am limited in my ability to pass on and show relevant information.”

“The lack of support within the school does make it difficult at times. Although there is no direct opposition, the fact that most teachers don’t seem to value the program much does rub off on students. As a consequence, attitudes can vary from excitement to indifference to refusal to participate.”

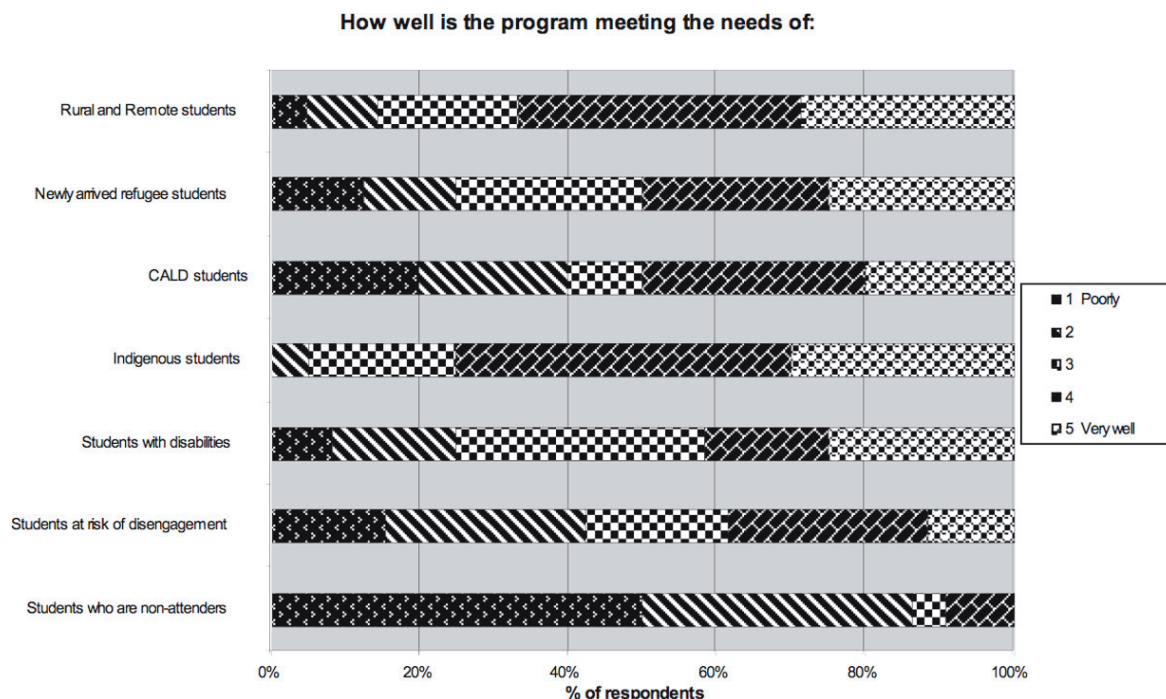


Figure 13: How well is the program meeting the needs of students?

The majority of PPOs who responded to the survey felt that it was meeting the needs of most groups of students at least moderately well. The group causing the most concern amongst PPOs is students who are non-attenders; almost 50% of respondents felt that the program was meeting their needs poorly (Figure 13).

The following comments from the PPOs surveyed illustrate some of their concerns in relation to equity groups:

“Students with personal/behavioural issues who are unable to focus on the Pathway Planning due to dealing with other problems.”

“Limited options for isolated students.”

“Any barriers to engagement usually occur with students who have such barriers to the other parts of their schooling; non-attendance/behavioural problems.”

“Those students who are consistently absent from school. Those students who have behavioural problems and are disengaged from school are also difficult to locate as they too are absent from school quite often. Due to tight timeframes it makes it difficult to take the extra time required to locate these students. Support teachers are advising that Pathway Planning these students would not be worthwhile. All students should be given the option!!”

However, for those that engage with the program, the outcomes are very positive.

“Pathway Planning has had a significant impact within the school. Students are increasingly more aware of the need to make good decisions about their engagement with their studies, to be aware of career requirements in course selection and have a greater understanding of what their strengths are and how they might build on them into the future. The requirements for them to set personal goals and to identify ways to achieve them are very powerful motivators for most students” (school Principal)

Principals report that student engagement in the program has been very good and when there has been an opportunity for feedback staff have been impressed with the information and insights it provides them about their students.

“Students are enthusiastic about discussing their pathway on a one-to-one basis and genuinely appreciate the help and support they receive from the PPO. This individual attention is seen as giving students the opportunity for talk about themselves and to identify their strengths, and goals.”

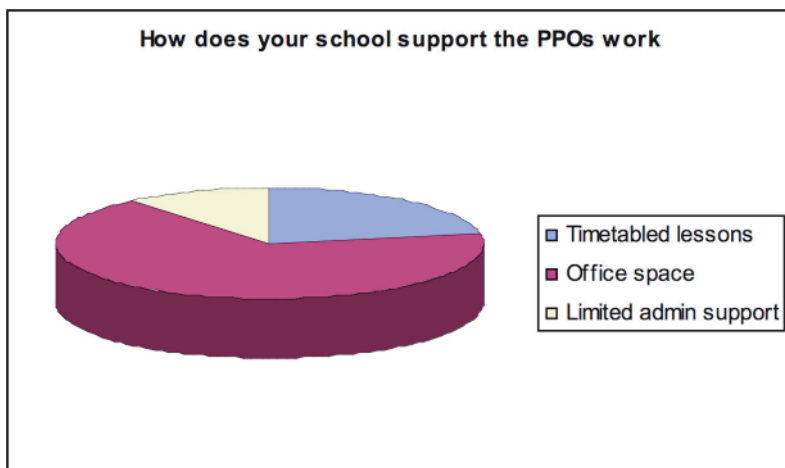


Figure 14: How does your school support the PPOs' work?

According to principals, by far the most common means of support by schools for PPOs is office space (Figure 14).

OUTCOMES

The survey's Outcomes section aimed to establish how successful both PPOs and principals feel the program has been. Two significant areas of agreement on successful elements of pathway planning were the level of student ownership of their future and the opportunity to have a conversation around the topic of future planning. Other important elements included work exploration, goal setting and skills development.

In addition, principals responded that contact with a trusted non-teacher was a positive outcome, along with clearer career plans, delivery of learning sequences through grade teams and increased engagement of students. Of the 12 respondents, ten were very satisfied with the way the PPO worked in their school and two were satisfied.

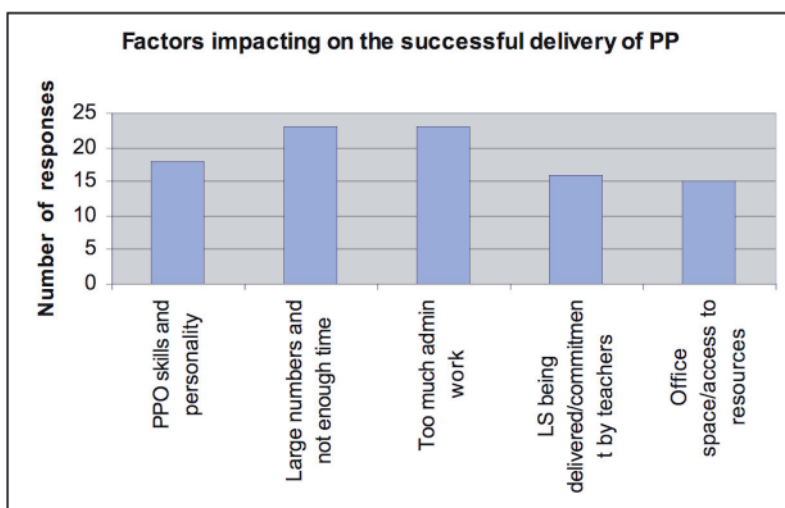


Figure 15: Factors impacting on the successful delivery of Pathway Planning

Having too many students on their workload and not enough time to attend to them and complete the administrative work necessary during working hours was the most common complaint by PPOs (Figure 15).

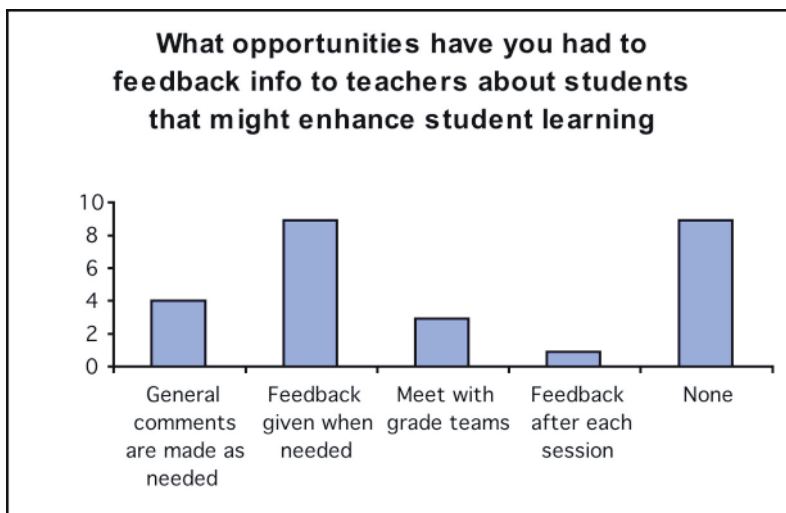


Figure 16: What opportunities have you had to feed information back to teachers about students that might enhance student learning?

A large proportion of the 28 PPOs who completed the survey indicated that they have had no opportunities to give relevant feedback to teachers. Another large group reported giving feedback to teachers where needed (Figure 16).

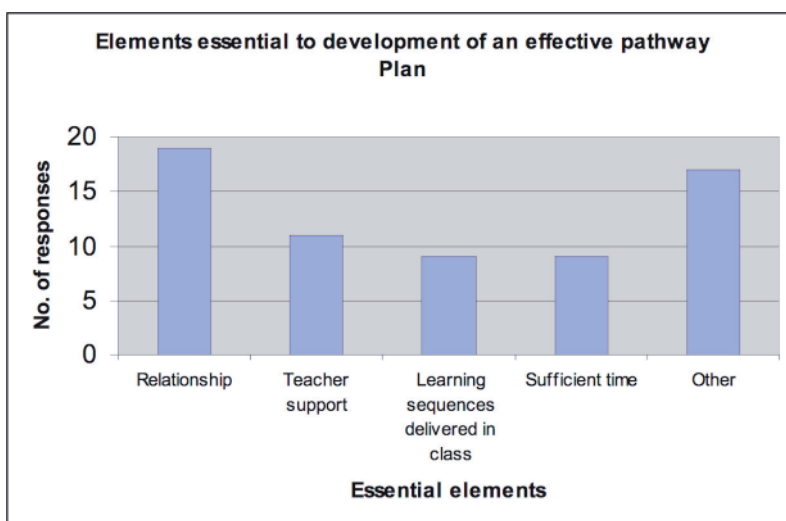


Figure 17: Elements essential to the development of an effective Pathway Plan

To work with students to develop effective Pathway Plans PPOs reported that they need to be able to form relationships with students, and then have the support of teachers and to have learning sequences delivered in classes (Figure 17).

The majority of principals who responded to the survey indicated that the program has had a positive or very positive effect in their schools (Figure 18 below).

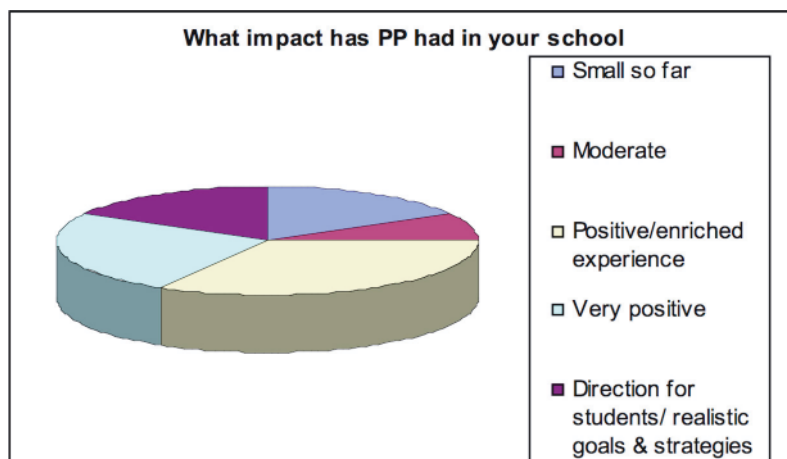


Figure 18: What impact has Pathway Planning had in your school?

DELIVERY

Both the PPOs' and principals' surveys included an "About You" section, designed to give participants the opportunity to discuss their own feelings about the program and their experience of it.

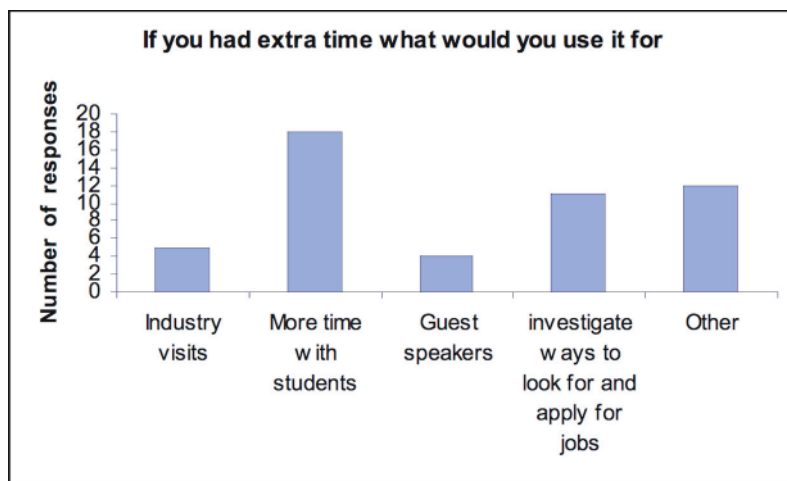


Figure 19: If you had extra time what would you use it for?

If PPOs had more time available the majority indicated that they would use it to spend more time with students or to gather valuable information for students (Figure 19).

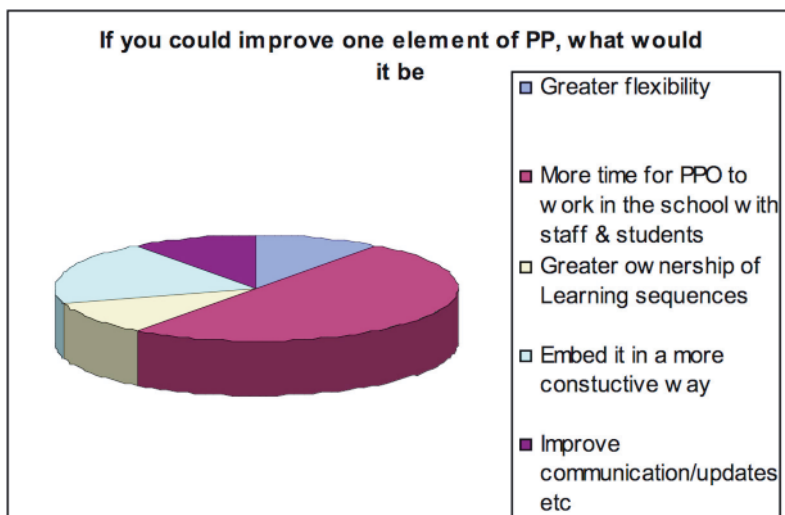


Figure 20: If you could improve one element of Pathway Planning, what would it be?

A majority of principals indicated that the one element of the program they would like to improve would be to allocate more time to working in the school with staff (Figure 20). Other points made by principals include:

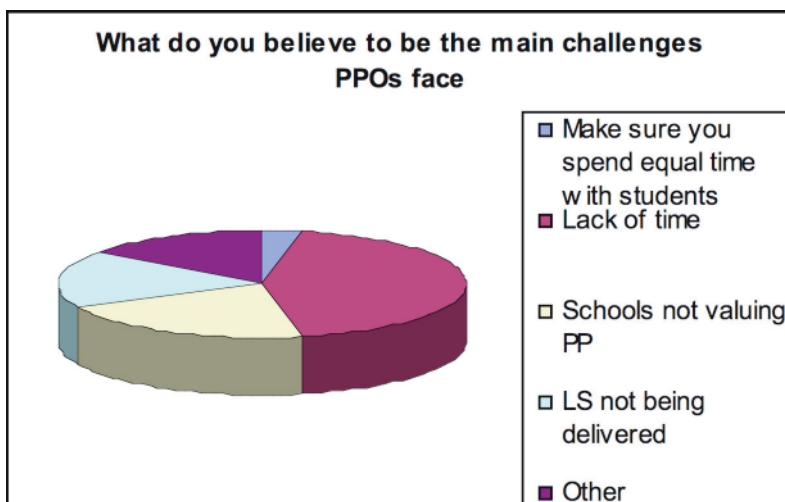


Figure 21: What do you believe to be the main challenges PPOs face?

Concerns about time constraints are repeated when PPOs are asked about the main challenges they face. The majority of respondents indicated that lack of time is their primary concern (Figure 21).

A number of principals and teachers indicated that it would have been valuable to have had access to induction material and PD and assistance in incorporating the program into their curriculum.

There was an assertion by some that timing impacted on the introduction of Pathway Planning because “it came at a time when schools and teachers were already under the gun of ELS”.

“The timing was interesting, the lack of take-up was not bad will – I just sense failure to engage, a failure to be interested. There is such information overload. It came at such a bad time. A judgemental time. Some teachers were really feeling like they were being told that the way that you have been doing it has been wrong and you have to start all over again. It makes the teachers very defensive and dig their heels in. ‘Oh, so where does my subject fit in there...’; ‘so what am I going teach now?’. Teachers are sensitive souls” (comment from a teacher)

Principals all reported having not done much more than an article in their newsletter to notify parents of Pathway Planning. This was clearly not enough as parents reported that they do not always see or read school newsletters and none of those parents spoken to recall having read the article. Most parents thought that a letter addressed to them would be a better way to communicate. When parents or primary carers do not live together, an attempt should be made to notify both.

One principal said that if models for good practice have been developed around these plans and the learning sequences then all schools could benefit from getting them out there.

Principals were asked how they were first introduced to Pathway Planning and what they believed it would take for teachers to more wholeheartedly embrace the program and begin to deliver the learning sequences in their classrooms.

A number of principals complained about the timing and delivery of the program. Many thought that the program needed to be unpacked for it to be more wholly accepted and were mostly interested in being able to have a PPO on site for a larger amount of time. For the most part, none had anything negative to say about the Pathway Planning initiative itself. Some admitted that they had the power to raise the profile of the program and personnel and that might lead to a greater sense of value and purpose of the program. It was suggested by one principal that giving curriculum leaders more support and time to ensure a deeper understanding of the Pathway Planning initiative and support materials would also go some way to creating a more vital program.

A few comments were:

“There is some concern that if GF management puts structures in place that dictate the number of interviews that PPOs are to have with each student per year it will inhibit the flexibility required to personalise the program in a way that the school believes will maximise the benefit for their students.”

“This is a program that widens the road for students, not narrows it.”

“External supervisors of the Pathway Planning program have at times restricted progress in developing programs to suit the needs of our school and students. At times it seems they would prefer a ‘one size fits all’ model.”

4.2 CALL FOR PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

Response to the call for submissions through newspapers, letters sent to interested stakeholders and a purpose designed website was disappointing. No submissions were received and there were no enquiries to the Project Team in response to the call for submissions.

4.3 FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

A range of focus groups and interviews were undertaken with teachers, parents and students and there was strong recognition of the need for an integrated approach.

TEACHERS

The focus of the discussion with teachers was around the notion put forward by PPOs that for Pathway Planning to be truly successful teachers need to embrace the program, understand its worth and that the learning sequences or their equivalent need to be delivered in classrooms.

“I think it is really important that Pathway Planning fulfils its aims. For that to happen it needs to be woven into the curriculum, the whole curriculum. I think that is essential. I know it is early days but it’s still on the outside and those connections can be woven into a much richer experience” (teacher)

This quote emphasises the benefit of an integrated approach to the delivery of Pathway Planning. Teachers almost universally do not feel as though they have had either the time or the opportunity for the training that they feel is necessary to be comfortable delivering the learning sequences that are a part of Pathway Planning. Many have not had the opportunity to look through the resource material and a few teachers interviewed reported that they do not know what the work that the PPO does with the students entails.

Teachers who have recently begun their teaching careers reported that they had no knowledge of Pathway Planning and thought they would have benefited from an introduction to such an important program being included in their university course.

Most teachers have a very different idea from principals or assistant principals as to how the program is running. In one case a principal reported that the school had done very little with Pathway Planning yet the teachers reported it had been universally well accepted while another principal described the work the PPO was doing and how well they were working with the teaching teams, and the teachers that the Project Team spoke to reported no knowledge of what the PPO was doing.

Teachers who don't feel comfortable with the material need activities to break it down for them. There are some schools that really need the program unpacked to a very basic level for them to be able to take it on. Teachers can then see how it relates to students and will then be able to recognise its worth.

This program can easily be seen as an extension of pastoral care. It is something new and people need to be flexible in their thinking around the program. Having support from the top is a make or break for this program.

There needs to be more PD for senior management in schools because support is needed at the top.

Every timetable is different, every curriculum is different, but there is a way for the program to be implemented everywhere and right now a lot of people just do not know how to integrate this into their curriculum. (teacher)

As explained in the Pathway Planning roles and responsibilities, teachers are to begin the process of Pathway Planning by introducing students to the concepts within the Learning Pathway Plan via the classroom curriculum. Curriculum support was to come from either VELDOs or from the complementary resources supplied to the schools.

"While all aspects of a comprehensive and developmental school guidance and counselling program are important, its curriculum is at the very heart of the program. Without it, counsellors are seen as providing a variety of services with no particular focus. The curriculum is a primary vehicle for delivering program content in its appropriate scope and sequence and delivered in the right settings developmentally" (Hayslip & VanZandt (2000)).

What was not taken into account was what needed to happen for teachers to begin to introduce these concepts to their students. It was the opinion of a number of both principals and teachers that senior staff need to be "sold" the Pathway Planning program and then be given the responsibility for line management of the program and for communicating with the PPO, because if the program is seen to be valued by senior staff, its adoption by the rest of the staff will be less problematic.

A number of common themes emerged. These are listed below:

- Pathway Planning needs to be considered as a "real program" if it is to be taken on by teachers (teacher)
- Pathway Planning needs to be part of their teaching load and not an optional extra
- PD around the learning sequences needs to be delivered in a timely manner
- The purpose of the program needs to be clearly explained; best practice model should be developed and "gotten out there" and some results need to be reported (principal)
- If they want this to be in schools, then it needs to be in schools, not just when you can fit it in (teacher)

- Before a program like this is delivered to a school, the school should figure out how they are going to implement it, and be dead serious about doing it
- For those of us already teaching a full load this is an additional teaching responsibility that requires additional preparation and I don't feel comfortable without taking the time to prepare
- With the amount of money that is being spent on this program, the implementation and delivery of it is important. It's paramount
- There are so many exciting things that we could do with this "if it was a real program in the school" (teacher)
- This program needs to be a part of a teacher's teaching load and must be developed as such, and there needs to be PD
- This program needs to be embedded well in the new Tasmanian curriculum as it will not be accepted as long as it is seen as an add-on. It feels like an imposition on staff with no ownership or control
- The PPO must be in the school as a member of staff and involved in all staff activities and there must be a senior teacher or member of staff who oversees the process and is responsible for it. Currently there is no value attached to it

STUDENTS

The majority of students spoken to have not discussed their plans with their parents. A common theme was that this is the time in their lives that they are moving away from their parents, so it is more likely that they will have these discussions with their peers than with their parents.

We asked students if they were enjoying Pathway Planning and what they felt they had gained or learned through the process. Responses varied greatly from school to school. Some students were able to clearly articulate what they have gained and demonstrated real excitement about the program while others were less forthcoming. Almost all expressed that this program had resulted in them thinking about what their future options were more quickly than they would have if left to their own devices.

A number of common themes emerged. Students reported:

- Being better informed about the choices they are being asked to make
- Having a better understanding of how to get where they want to go and how to look for information if they change their minds
- Having a greater acceptance that they are exploring and that they might often change their minds
- Making course changes based on what they have discovered about themselves
- Developing confidence in their abilities to plan their futures
- Making class choice based on their interests and future plans instead of "what classes my friends are going to be in"

It was noted that only a small group of students talked to their parents about the program.

PARENTS

PPOs report that the parents they have spoken to routinely disclose that they wish the Pathway Planning initiative had been in place when they were at school as they are certain that they would have benefited from it.

Very few parents that the Project Team spoke to as part of this research even knew about the program before they were asked to participate, so a different way of communicating with parents needs to be developed if they are to be more involved. The majority of parents spoken to had little knowledge of Pathway Planning; most had enquired as to what it was when they agreed to participate in the focus group discussions. That said, they did have an interest in being further involved as some saw the plans as a good opportunity to connect with their children.

On the whole, parents are yet to become fully engaged in this process. It was found to be virtually impossible to contact parents willing to participate in a focus group discussion or on the phone at a number of the schools visited. This was in part due to confidentiality issues with not being able to obtain phone numbers or not being able to get parents to return phone calls. A number of parents who were willing to participate in discussions about Pathway Planning were employed at the schools, and even then they knew very little about the program. What they knew they had gleaned since being asked to participate because they did not want to come into the focus group with no knowledge at all.

A few recalled “maybe” having read something in a newsletter about Pathway Planning, and a few had found last year’s completed plan under their child’s bed and had enquired what it was. There were a few exceptions to this finding. The parents who were chosen to participate in focus group discussions at Huonville knew a great deal about the program and the work their children were doing with the PPO. The parents had all had the opportunity to speak with the PPO personally.

Students’ responses to their parents’ involvement ran to comments such as:

- “I may have my parents read my plan, but I don’t want to discuss it with them”
- My parents don’t need to be engaged with this. We can tell them where we want to go, but it’s not about them”
- “My parents might be able to help me with the ‘What are my skills section?’”

Almost all parents would have liked more information about Pathway Planning and a lesser number expressed an interest in being able to see their child’s plan as a work in progress online.

One parent felt that parents should be consulted on the “What are my skills?” section of the plan. She believed that in most cases parents are in the best position to be the most aware of the skills their children possess. A number of children agreed that their parents could have helped with that section of the plan which they all found difficult to complete. A student at Ogilvie suggested that all students should be given the option to take certain sections of the plan home to complete with their parents’ assistance if they so desired.

However, an equal number felt that their peers knew them better than their parents did or they were more likely to give them an unbiased view of their individual talents. One principal felt that asking parents to assist with this step was defeating the purpose of the exercise which is to have these students learn to begin to identify and articulate positives about themselves.

4.4 CASE STUDIES OF TEN SCHOOLS

Developing the case studies began with follow-up focus groups with the PPOs, held in all three regions. Information provided from the analysed surveys and the regional focus group discussions then informed a detailed investigation of ten schools statewide. Based on population demographics, five schools from the South, three from the North and two from the North-West were selected. Guaranteeing Futures regional managers were asked to nominate twice the number of schools in their area as needed for the case studies. Australian Bureau of Statistics data was then consulted before selections were made, to ensure that there was a representative mix of differing socio-economic climates, as well as urban, rural and isolated populations.

A synopsis of the conversations with principals, PPOs, students and parents is included in this section of the report. It provides a snapshot of the range of viewpoints surrounding the implementation of Pathway Planning and indicates generally a positive perception of Pathway Planning.

Interestingly, the introduction of Pathway Planning has sparked some valuable debates around issues of logistics, parental involvement, training and resources. Suggestions were made to begin the program earlier, particularly in relation to retention. The connection between Pathway Planning and other career-related programs such as the “Real Game” and Beacon’s “No Dole” program were raised.

A number of schools are considering ways to raise the profile of Pathway Planning and several indicated the importance of embedding the PPOs more effectively into the school culture. Pleasingly, a number already regard Pathway

Planning as integral to the school culture.

HUONVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

The impression at Huonville High is that Pathway Planning is a program that is valued from the top and underpins everything the school does, which results in the school investing time and money in the education of its staff. At the start of the 2006 school year the school delivered a PD session where it was explained to the staff how Pathway Planning was going to run. The school believes the program needs broad acceptance for it to operate successfully, and they can’t achieve that until everyone knows and understands the program. It was not enough for the staff to know that the principal believed in it; the PD was crucial to the staff take-up.

Huonville reports that it invests a lot of time in PD because it wants this program to work and believes that people who work there need to know and fully understand the “My Plan for My Future” resource. Teachers are encouraged to know what is in their students’ individual plans because, in knowing this, they will be able to gain a greater understanding of that student. These plans also allow the school to plot what each student does and therefore what they offer that student in the future.

“This is not a program that can just be given to the schools with an expectation that they will do it. The Department of Education needs to discover ways to bring Principals on board. Up to this point Principals have not been convinced of its value, but if the Department of Education can get Principals to value it, the rest of the school will accept the program. One way to do this might be to have Principals do some of the selling, because Principals listen to other Principals because they understand the pressure of balancing timetables and the PD sessions should always be delivered from someone within the ranks, and from someone that both teachers and principals respect”

Pathway Planning PD is compulsory for teachers of Years 8–10, because students at Huonville are encouraged to use teachers as a resource and it is likely that a student you connected with the previous year may want to discuss their plan and if that happens, teachers need a solid grounding in the program.

The program at Huonville sits in a larger framework about futures and one viewpoint is that if the staff had just focused on the plan, the plan might become a problem and lose its value; therefore, they did more than just unpack the plan. They felt that because the program was in its infancy, they were concerned that it might get lost if it was not delivered as part of a whole package for each of the years. To that end they have developed packages for Year 8 and Year 9 teachers, and will be doing the same for Year 10 teachers.

“You can hide behind a lot of reasons why you are not going to do it or you can just embrace it. Look at what you are doing, and look at where it fits, and if it doesn’t quite fit, is it possible to make some subtle changes? Look at who is going to own it. Never put the ownership in the hands of one person. Give it to a team across the school. You then have built in accountability, built in sharing. You also have the reflection happening. I think that it is good – I can’t really see any problems with it at all”

The opinion at Huonville High is that schools will always believe their curriculum is already full; so to get them to take Pathway Planning on they need to find where the program links into what they are already doing and squeeze it in there, because it has to start somewhere, and this is an ideal time for schools to discover where this program fits.

REECE HIGH SCHOOL

Reece High School ran with Pathway Planning from the start. The Reece High principal reports that the school has a different attitude to teaching and learning than some of its contemporaries. Everything delivered to the students is connected; they have no isolated packages of knowledge. Therefore, from the beginning the staff looked at Pathway Planning and asked where it was going to fit in the curriculum, how they would build on it, and how they would initiate two-way communications with the PPO who was going to be assigned to their school. When the PPO arrived at the school he/she was immediately made part of the team and housed with one of the teams that operate in the school. The PPO at Reece would have never felt the isolation that other PPOs report.

At Reece everything is interconnected. Therefore no program is ever isolated from the rest. The school’s philosophy is that for real learning to occur and be sustained long-term, there have to be interconnections. They believe that programs that are allowed to sit “outside” stand a greater chance of failure.

Where some schools contend that they are so under the gun, time- and resource-wise, and that there should have been more support unpacking and integrating the package into the curriculum, Reece made the connection immediately between the objectives of Pathway Planning and Guaranteeing Futures. The Pathway Planning resource was never considered an optional extra. School Principal Ms Vertigan believed that Guaranteeing Futures was about making Tasmania a clever state.

Reece High School burnt down in 2000 and instead of recreating what was there previously, it was decided to begin anew. They studied the data on poor retention, participation and career motivation and decided that Guaranteeing Futures gave them permission to put more of an emphasis on solving

these problems. According to Ms Vertigan, the framework provided allows a person to see how it all connects. Previously the school ran programs that the principal viewed as isolated packages, such as work experience, “which were nice, but in reality they did not change anyone’s behaviour”.

There is a leadership team at Reece and the school focuses on building leadership density. This means that the teams actively observe people’s practice, which means there is less opportunity for recalcitrance amongst the teachers because the team holds everyone accountable and if one of the teachers does not fulfil their obligations to the team then their peer group would not be there to support them. A lot of team planning occurs at Reece and behaviour support is based around team support; it is part of the structure as well as the process.

The talk at Reece is about children realising their potential and creating and pursuing their goals. There is an option strand in the curriculum called “Realising Potential” which is about the student as a learner creating and pursuing his or her goals, and in Year 8 they have a program entitled “Aim Higher, Aim Wider” which links perfectly with Pathway Planning.

Currently the number of students leaving Reece and continuing on to Don College is not as high as the principal would like, and when asked if change needed to come from the top or would it be driven by students, her view is that it needs to meet in the middle. Teachers on one end, principals on the other, and the children are in the middle. If you have to wait for students, or even recalcitrant teachers, you will be waiting a long time. Everyone at Reece has a career plan. When teachers have their individual PD, they talk about goals, what they want to do and how they are going to get there; this planning is part of the culture at Reece and that was part of the revolution. The teachers at Reece get moved around, so they are constantly learning and moving along their pathways.

Teachers can get narrow in their focus and they may get to the point where they think that more reading, writing and arithmetic are going to make a difference, and they are not. Some classrooms can become like jails because the door is never open and other people never come in, but Reece is very open. Teachers are not worried about the PPO being in their class or team meeting.

Ms Vertigan said that “The essence is to discover where Pathway Planning connects with the curriculum. Where does it fit with the culture and the plan of the school? We have a set of values and purposes here that underpin what we do. If you have values which talk about life-long learning and building connections – they should inform everything that you do. So to her it is simple, they may not always get it right, but she says they will definitely continue to improve, and their challenge now will be to take it up another level when it goes into the grade 10s”.

Ms Vertigan said she did not agree in the beginning with the Guaranteeing Futures plan. She thought that the money should be put specifically into a teacher who was already at the school – but now she says she thinks the model works. The level of involvement the PPO has with people at the school is critical.

ROSEBERY HIGH SCHOOL

Rosebery was the most isolated school visited for this review. The Principal, Alex Downes, feels the school has embraced Pathway Planning pretty well. While the school does not teach an explicit unit or deliver the learning sequences, he claims the PPO is clearly visible. Because of space limitations, the PPO does not have an office and works in the classroom with students. The PPO claims that as long as the class is noisy this is not a problem, but it becomes one if the class falls silent for any length of time, as then everything that is said can be overheard.

Isolation causes a number of problems for Rosebery students and because of that the school is supported by various state and federal programs. The principal believes that the number of external people who travel to work in the different programs that are running in the school can be problematic.

They may have a part-time (0.1) person for one program, a part-time (0.2) for another and then Pathway Planning on top of that, all working on different days, none being able to make effective connections with the students because of the limited time they have to spend there. Mr Downes feels there is enough similarity within the programs for one person to deliver them all and do a far better job of it.

“Having just one person deliver all of the programs would be the best advice that I could give you about improving this program for the coming years, and if that person was from Burnie it would be even better as they would have an intimate knowledge of the area and an intimate knowledge of the college. That would help when it comes to sorting out the when, where, how and which subjects to choose” (Principal)

Another change that the principal would like to see is a merger of TAFE colleges with Year 11. They have children doing work placement that have worked well and they have started some of their Year 10 students working on Certificate 1 at the Queenstown TAFE; Mr Downes has found getting the TAFE colleges on board to be one of the hardest things he has done in 20 years of teaching. Everyone says they want to make it work, but there is always a barrier, be it money or getting teachers down from Devonport to teach.

The age difference between a Year 10 student and the eligibility age of TAFE is not large enough to justify not allowing them to enter TAFE as far as he is concerned, and he says that should be especially true when a student has a particular pathway in mind and has the backing of parents and the community. If the TAFE and college system were to merge it might make the transition a bit more seamless and would really assist with Pathway Planning for particular students.

The principal believes that the school has seven students who have gone up to Year 11 this year but, according to him, the reality is that while a number of students in Year 9 may say that they are going to enrol at Hellyer College the closer they get to actually getting there, the more the reality of it all starts to set in. How do they get the money in the bank to pay for food and books and travel? Where are they going to stay during the week? How are they going to get back at weekends? Those issues stop a number of students from going on to further study.

The principal suggested that it would be helpful if someone from the Department of Education provided a kit and some training to new teachers. Many new teachers end up with their first teaching assignment in a rural/remote town and they need to be aware of the activities that are running in schools at the moment. Mr Downes suggested it would be a good exercise if a current rural/remote school principal was invited to speak to a group of prospective teachers and then have some of those students come out and speak to the students and track a couple of kids for a day. This would give them a grounding in how schools operate and enable them to gain a clearer perspective about where they were going and what they would be doing when they got there.

When asked if he thought “My Plan for My Future” worked for all students, especially those who were experiencing social problems, he said he felt the program has been designed well enough to be relevant to every child.

“Where the secret lies is in the selling and the teaching. The school’s job is to inform and educate and tailor the program for the particular group. In the end the resource is there and it is up to the schools to adjust it to their particular culture and school priorities. Some of the stuff in there might be dead simple, and some might be stuff that the kids really struggle with, but that is what happens in school and life” (Principal)

ROSE BAY HIGH SCHOOL

“Pathway Planning has had a significant impact within the school. Students are increasingly more aware of the need to make good decisions about their engagement with their studies, to be aware of career requirements in course selection and have a greater understanding of what their strengths are and how they might build on these into the future. The requirements for them to set personal goals and to identify ways to achieve these are very powerful motivators for most students” (Principal)

Rose Bay High School has weekly class time dedicated to the Pathway Planning learning sequences. When the program was implemented the school made the decision to place the sequences into a 50-minute time slot dedicated to pastoral care. Principal Steve Manning says that if he had not had this time available he is not sure where or if he could have fitted it in. This time slot is also when school assemblies are held and when teachers routinely attend to administration issues; so there can be any number of interruptions.

Initially three teachers decided to take Pathway Planning on board. They worked with the PPO on what they could do and developed class work around the learning sequences. Three other teachers then became interested and began delivering some of the sequences as well. The teachers said that it really helped to have the PPO and the VELDO there to help them develop their class work. The PPO at Rose Bay has participated in other activities that have enabled the students and staff to get to know her better and she is now seen as an integral part of the school team.

“The PPOs who have been employed here have been excellent. They are an outstanding asset to the school’s teaching and learning teams” (Steve Mannering, Principal)

Over time, Rose Bay hopes to further embed Pathway Planning into the curriculum as this will enable students to make a more direct connection between their day-to-day teaching and learning programs with what they need in order to succeed in life and work.

There is evidence that because of the school’s increased engagement with visiting speakers from a range of areas the students are getting a greater awareness of life beyond high school and a better understanding of what could be possible for them beyond Year 10.

“For years we have asked students in Year 8 to select subjects for Years 9 and 10. We have been narrowing their pathways when we have asked them to specialise without having any understanding about what their pathways into the future are. Now we tell them to think about their pathways and try to keep their options open” (Teacher)

As the children grow and learn throughout the year they inevitably make changes to their plans at the end of the year. This causes a lot of work for the PPO as he or she has to go into each one of those plans and make the changes. This year the deadline was the end of October. This is just not

realistic. For it to be effective there has to be time for individual consultations. The students need to look at what they originally wrote, and then make a decision as to whether that still represents their thoughts and beliefs.

“We have 150 Year 9s here and 140 Year 8s with one PPO who is supposed to have an individual interview with each one. She has done it, but I don’t know how. It is a lot to get through” (Teacher)

Students all know that the plans are on Sharepoint and that they can view them at home, but I am not aware that any of them have or have shown their parents them. I am on the school association along with six Grade 8–9 parents, and I do not believe that any of them have said anything about Pathway Planning

There is some uncertainty amongst teachers about whether completed plans should go home to parents or not. As one teacher indicated, “Their other school work does not go home. They might occasionally take some home, but you usually only see reports. Even at parent-teacher night they don’t see the work. Pathway Planning would fall into the same category”.

Students interviewed for this review reported having learned a number of things about themselves through the process. One of those things was an acknowledgement of how often they change their minds about what it is they want to be doing upon leaving school. A number of students were happy to have gained part-time work after working on their CVs with their PPO.

“The Pathways Planning Program is an outstanding addition to the school’s programs for students. It also provides excellent opportunities to further invigorate the curriculum” (Principal)

NEW NORFOLK HIGH SCHOOL

The importance of Pathway Planning support for students has been a very important focus at New Norfolk even prior to the introduction of the current program. The school had a program running called Pathways to the Future, which was based around project-based learning. Students would investigate the world of work, talk about what they needed to do to engage in work and discuss work ethics. That was 18 months before PPOs were allocated. The principal reported that the school discontinued the program because the staff did not have enough content to fill the allocated time and because the students did not value the program because it was not assessed.

When Pathway Planning did make its way to New Norfolk there were implementation problems. The principal reports that it was under-resourced, the original material was fragmented and the electronic material was delivered in a format that was not compatible with their computer system. Students at New Norfolk already had digital portfolios but they were not compatible with the Department of Education's version of Sharepoint.

Principal David Hamlett said that it was just a cold package. The folder provided for staff was big, but it would have been of more use if it had been integrated into what they were already doing, not just given to them as an add-on. Teachers were there who wanted to deliver the material and they wanted PD on the material but none was forthcoming.

However, because their students rarely go on to Year 11 they were eager to get a program up and running. In fact they believe because their students have such low retention to Year 11 rates they would like to begin delivering material such as this in Year 7. Their decision was to deliver 100 minutes a week of Pathway Planning content but they found there was not enough material prepared to enable them do so.

OGILVIE HIGH SCHOOL

“We need to sit down and think about how the aims of Pathway Planning coincide with the aims of components of the curriculum” (Teacher)

At Ogilvie the home economics and health and wellbeing teachers are delivering the “Real Game” program in their home room classes. None of the learning sequences are being delivered, yet all of the other teachers at Ogilvie spoken to as part of this review reported that they believe the initiative to have real merit. One teacher remarked that “by and large it has been embraced very well by this school. Everyone knows about it and I don't know of anyone who does not support it”.

However, current changes in syllabus will delay a stronger focus on Pathway Planning until 2008. The principal noted that students are having to work through issues of self that have serious implication to their continuing study. The Principal suggested that these discussions may be better accomplished with their parents than PPOs. The role of parents in the Pathway Planning process was a point put forward at other schools in conversation with students and other principals. However, one teacher reminded us that not all students have lots of support at home.

Ogilvie was interesting because the conversations differed so dramatically between those that we had with the principal and those with teachers and students. Teachers reported that Pathway Planning was already seen as part of the school's program, but that they needed PD around the learning sequences so that they could more fully implement the program. Then it needed to be threaded in with the curriculum because currently it was seen as something separate.

Students were engaged and reported that they were getting a lot out of their time with the PPO this year. They said they knew they were thinking about the future much earlier than they would have if left to their own devices; they are secure in the knowledge that there is life beyond Tasmania and they are making course choices based on their interests rather than on what classes their friends were going to be in for the first time. Two students said that the experience this year was in marked contrast to the year before, when the plans were given to them very late in the year and they just rushed through them without much thought or understanding of the purpose behind them.

Teachers here agreed with almost all others that we spoke to. They wanted PD. One teacher said that she had recently overheard some teachers from another school who have class time dedicated to Pathway Planning and it was her belief that what that school is doing would do a lot more for the students than what is being done at Ogilvie. Another said that it needs to be stated that this is a Department of Education priority.

“Often children see themselves in five or ten years time in a place that is totally out of kilter with reality...don't know if this is its aim but one of the good things that I see coming out of Pathway Planning is that it counters the lie that everyone can have it all” (Teacher)

“I think it is most important for Pathway Planning to fulfil its aims and to do that it should be woven into the curriculum, the whole curriculum. I think that is essential. I know it is early days but it's still on the outside and those connections can be woven into a much richer experience” (Teacher)

TRIABUNNA HIGH SCHOOL

We spoke to two people at Tri abunna who had opened the resource material that was supplied with the Pathway Planning materials. One teacher said she was quite excited by the material when she first read it, and she had meant to deliver some of the learning sequences in her classes, but she has not got around to it yet.

Triabunna staff raised other issues about links with existing programs such as the “No Dole” program delivered by the Beacon Foundation and the potential to duplicate student experiences in relation to preparing for their future.

The assistant principal and the teachers all agreed that if Pathway Planning is not in a teacher’s work plan then the teacher is much less likely to deliver it because teachers are not necessarily good at things that are not enforced or assessed.

Students spoken to all had ideas of what they would be doing when they had completed Year 10. A few said that they would be completing Years 11 and 12 at the learning centre in Triabunna while the majority planned to attend Hobart College.

One parent that we spoke to had a very different set of concerns in relation to issues of realistic expectations for her child who has a disability.

“Children here know that with the current labour shortage that they can just walk out of here and into a job. There is no notion that they need to complete Year 10” (Teacher)

PROSPECT HIGH SCHOOL

From reading the questionnaires completed by both the PPO and the principal of Prospect High it appears that Pathway Planning is running well. The PPO has a permanent office that is well-equipped. The principal reports that the PPO makes regular contact with the grade leader and attends the grade teaching and learning team meetings. The grade teams deliver the Pathway Planning learning sequences to all students in the interdisciplinary learning time and all grades have weekly interdisciplinary learning time.

The principal does say that the school could still raise the profile of Pathway Planning which would improve its sense of value and purpose, and curriculum leaders could be supported with more time to ensure they had a deeper understanding of the Pathway Planning program and support materials.

Pathway Planning fits well in this school because it complements a program that is already up and running there: Prospect High also runs a program based on the “Big Picture” schools that are operating in the US. This program focuses on individual student needs and links students with local businesses and industry. It has as one of its aims to serve as an asset to the local community and its needs.

In marked contrast to comments made by the principal and assistant principal the teachers interviewed for this review had very little understanding of Pathway Planning and reported that they do not know what work the PPO does with the students, and that while the PPO does attend the

staff meetings they seldom ask her any questions and there is not a time in those meetings for her to let them know what work she is doing with the students. Two of the teachers complained that the resource materials provided aim too low for their students.

The students interviewed reported that they enjoyed working with the PPO and that they were beginning to firm up ideas on what they might be doing post-Year 10.

PORT DALRYMPLE HIGH SCHOOL

There is recognition by staff at Port Dalrymple of a need not only to prepare students for the transition to college but for the next ten years of their life and beyond. It is recognised by the school that Pathway Planning fits with what the school is trying to do. However, while Pathway Planning was embraced and timetabled there was an admission that the teachers really should be immersed in the program through PD.

The school believes that it needs to narrow the gap between Years 10 and 11, because an enormous barrier exists for Port Dalrymple kids in relation to completion of Year 11.

While the students interviewed for this review almost all plan on attending Year 11 in Launceston, historically a high number of students from Port Dalrymple have not completed the first year of college. The principal and parents agree that the students are not prepared or committed enough for the long days and a 7am bus trip that is necessary for them to get to classes in Launceston. The assistant principal says it is the early road trip that does it. "We had ten start college last year and only two or three are still there", he said.

The principal believes that students who are faced with bigger challenges when it comes to enrolling in college could use more support before they get there. He would like to make certain that students' choices are as well informed as possible and that they are clear about what the following years may entail, and if possible make certain that they are as firmly committed as possible to the path they choose.

The principal feels that if something is worth doing, it is worth doing properly and to that end he would like people from the Department and the VELDOS to be more visible if they are the ones supposed to be providing the training around Pathway Planning, because he believes that the teachers need a more solid background in the program. He would also like more sharing of information about the work the PPO is doing with the students and about the students' individual plans.

The principal says that he loves the program and the majority of teachers interviewed believed that Pathway Planning has merit. They felt that the resources supplied save teachers a lot of time because they are flexible and teachers can just pull something out and teach it easily, but felt that it would have been helpful if the Department had helped them fit sequences around their curriculum. They did feel that the learning sequences needed to be tied to the work the children were doing with the PPO or the students would be likely to become disengaged.

Teachers said that it would really help if the PPO was in the school more often and became more embedded into the teaching teams. They felt that having a PPO there just one day a week was just not good enough and three days a week would work well there. They reported that in "hard schools" such as theirs the relationships with the students became really important, and one day a week combined with the workload of PPOs made that very difficult. The opinion was that PPOs' workloads are too great; they need to be in the schools longer and have time to float through classes and work alongside teachers.

Students stated that they had better ideas about what it was they really wanted to do and now had the ability to know what they needed to do if they decided to change direction.

Parents interviewed knew little of the program. Only one of the five parents interviewed had seen the previous year's completed plan. One parent did say that schools should make an effort on something as important as this to be certain that both parents, in the case of parents who live separately, are advised of programs such as these.

ST MARYS HIGH SCHOOL

Principal Charlotte Marshall said that from the beginning teachers understood that Pathway Planning was not something extra but an integral part of the school curriculum, and it was made easier because she lobbied the Department of Education to make certain that they were not allocated a part-time PPO who was not known to students or staff. She was able to see that a local person who was already working on a number of programs within the school and had rapport with the both staff and students was given the job. Ms Marshall felt that having someone who was "locally grown and known to the community" was the key to the program's success.

St Marys restructured its secondary program and now has a "Personal Futures" day on Wednesdays. Pathway Planning happens in a designated section of the curriculum on that day and students are able to make the connection between the curriculum and the work they do with the PPO.

Ms Marshall reports that they have good retention rates in the East Coast cluster, but are committed to improving them. Students can complete Year 11 and 12 in St Marys or go to Launceston. She reports that moving to Launceston is tough for most students as there is little pastoral care in the accommodation villas and most students who go there end up dropping out.

Teachers who deliver the learning sequences at St Marys report that some of the material is out-of-date and links provided are often dead. They made the suggestions that the sequences need to be sequential and care needs to be taken that there is no repetition.

The students interviewed for this review were quite effusive about many of the opportunities they had to explore work options, but it was hard to ascertain which of these were Pathway Planning-related. Because the PPO works on programs other than Pathway Planning there appears to be some crossover of programs; however, all were future work-related. But telling where Pathway Planning stopped and the other programs began was difficult. It was easy to tell though that the children were experiencing a wide variety of engaging experiences that were offering them glimpses of future work options.

One issue that arose was the cost of getting students to industry events in Launceston. For one such trip the PPO was able to get the organisers of the event to donate the cost of the bus that transported the students, but if she had not been able to garner such support the trip would have been financially impossible.

5. DISCUSSION

The evidence gathered through this review indicates that the foundations for an effective Pathway Planning structure are being built in Tasmania. The review found that Pathway Planning is generally working well; a range of materials exists to inform and support it; there is a high degree of commitment to the program amongst PPOs, Department of Education staff and by students. The schools that have embraced Pathway Planning provide an encouraging glimpse of what is possible in terms of teacher and school engagement and demonstrate the potential for Pathway Planning to become not only an embedded part of learning in schools but one that sets a foundation for life-long learning.

There are opportunities to learn from the many examples of very good practice to inform a strategy to improve the quality of delivery in Pathway Planning overall. Clearly there are some significant examples of very good practice occurring in this early stage of development of Pathway Planning. Three schools in particular – Reece High School, Huonville High School and Rose Bay – have made particularly good progress given the time frame for implementation.

Whilst it is clear that a program of this complexity needs to complete at least a full three-year cycle to fully evaluate its value to students and Tasmania, from the ten case studies the research team identified a number of elements of good practice.

- The principal and teachers value Pathway Planning and actively facilitate its integration into the school community
- The school integrates pathway planning into its curriculum and recognises other programs (e.g. “Real Game”) as complementing and supporting Pathway Planning
- The PPO is recognised as a key member of the school and is resourced in delivering the program
- There is a strong commitment by the school to Guaranteeing Futures, student outcomes and student goals
- The students are engaged in and understand the relevance of Pathway Planning to their future life, learning and work decisions
- The school invests in the PD of its teachers to ensure the resources (learning sequences) are well understood and that its implementation is a priority
- The PPO builds effective relationships across the school and the broader community and is available to students on a regular basis

The Project Team commends the Department of Education for instituting an ongoing review process to foster continuous quality improvement within the program but the development of effective processes for evaluating Pathway Planning provides challenges. The benefits of Pathway Planning may emerge over many years and in ways that are difficult to clearly link to Pathway Planning, so strategies for evaluation must be implemented throughout the three-year Pathway Planning cycle and should also measure the impact on students after their graduation. These strategies may include ongoing action research, auditing of completed plans, student exit surveys and research into destinations of students completing plans. But opportunities also exist to consider broader longitudinal surveys that may provide additional feedback to inform the future development of Pathway Planning. To facilitate such evaluation the objectives for the Pathway Planning program need to be more transparent so that they are more easily understood by students, teachers, parents and the broader community, and enable useful evaluation to be conducted.

Recommendation 1: Clear program objectives, performance indicators and benchmarks are necessary to facilitate ongoing evaluation of the program.

Pathway Planning provides significant additional opportunities to research not only the impact of the program itself but aspects of the effectiveness of the broader system of education. There is potential to see the outcomes of Pathway Planning as one of a number of performance indicators for the success of the whole system.

In relation to Pathway Planning there are a number of potential performance indicators that could be considered. These need to be developed in response to program objectives and would mainly focus on the outcomes for individuals. A number of studies indicate that Pathway Planning programs are often associated with an improvement in retention. While retention is one performance indicator, the issues surrounding it are multifaceted and pathway planning must be seen within a broader context of interventions. Other important indicators for the success of pathway planning include:

- Improvements in the level of engagement by students in their school work.
- Levels and type of employment outcomes for students
- Level of awareness of future life, learning and work opportunities
- Skills acquisition in relation to career/life management
- Student satisfaction with Pathway Planning
- Employer or parent satisfaction with Pathway Planning and the preparedness of students for life, learning and work
- The impact of Pathway Planning on the curriculum and changes in approaches to teaching and learning

Deciding what to research next has to be considered carefully. For example, when doing follow up research on the effectiveness of this program, the 2007 Year 8 cohort should probably be considered to be the first to be involved in any outcomes evaluation. This is because the program and resource materials were introduced into some schools late in the first year with little associated publicity when staff were already under pressure from the implementation of Essential Learnings. There were also questions about the adequacy of communication and induction processes during the introduction of Pathway Planning into some schools. As a result some students began working on their Year 8 plans very late in the year and thus did not benefit as much as they otherwise might have.

Key areas of potential research interest include:

- the student experience of Pathway Planning including how Pathway Planning assists students to develop career self-management skills.
- the effectiveness of strategies for parental and teacher engagement
- strategies for meeting the additional needs of students with high support requirements, e.g. disability
- the contribution Pathway Planning can make to the state's human capital development
- The potential for extending Pathway Planning to include college and TAFE programs (e.g. portability of eportfolio and other resources across education and training systems)

Recommendation 2: An ongoing program of evaluative research be developed to monitor the effectiveness and impact of Pathway Planning.

5.1 ENGAGEMENT & INTEGRATION

It is clear from this research that greater success can be achieved if Pathway Planning is part of the culture of the school environment rather than an add-on. The program is clearly more effective in those schools where principals, teachers and parents have a clear understanding of the purpose and principles underlying Pathway Planning, and links to school priorities and the Guaranteeing Futures initiative are clear. If it is to be effective Pathway Planning cannot be a “bolt on” to an already overloaded school curriculum. It must be a mainstream component that can inform learning, contribute to retention and assist students to make informed decisions about their future lives. The research team observed that when principals and other leaders within the school community supported Pathway Planning it was accepted as part of the school culture. Developing strategies to increase ownership of Pathway Planning within schools is likely to increase significantly the capacity of the program to achieve desired outcomes.

The range and depth of understanding of the Pathway Planning program across each of the schools visited was variable but generally stakeholders had a positive perception of Pathway Planning and a number of schools are considering ways to raise the profile of Pathway Planning. Several indicated the importance of embedding Pathway Planning more effectively into the school culture and a number already regard Pathway Planning as integral to their school culture. The students who are in the schools that have more fully embraced the program go into an appointment with a PPO with a sound grounding in the concepts, and in some instances some of the work on their plans has been completed in the classroom. With some of the preliminary work already completed, the PPO is able to work with the students on fine-tuning the plan rather than starting from scratch.

Some PPOs work in classrooms assisting in the delivery of Pathway Planning material. When class time is allocated PPOs are seen as an important part of the staff and students tended to place a higher value on the program. Some schools indicated a desire to have greater access to their PPO so that they could work with staff to develop curriculum materials and to enable them to be able to revisit issues with particular students and to offer repeat sessions on some topics.

However, the review found that overall the level of teacher engagement is often low, and the level of parental engagement remains a challenge for all schools. The clear variation in the degree of commitment demonstrated by schools and principals to Pathway Planning is a matter requiring urgent attention. The long-term success of Pathway Planning is likely to occur as a composite of formal and informal influences provided by parents, teachers, peers, PPOs and many others. Finding ways to improve the level of engagement of key influencers is likely to impact positively on the overall quality and effectiveness of Pathway Planning.

Capturing some of the knowledge and information that emerges from the Pathway Planning processes may not only inform school priorities but is also likely to open up opportunities to introduce new learning initiatives with the school. For this reason feedback from Pathway Planning activities should be communicated regularly to school executive and council meetings.

Recommendation 3: An induction program to engage with schools and their communities should be implemented to ensure that the Pathway Planning program is integrated into the life of the school community.

ENGAGEMENT BY PARENTS

In many areas of education there are identified positive effects from parental involvement and this is equally applicable to Pathway Planning. In most if not all career research, parents are recognised as being influential in the career and learning decisions of their sons and daughters (Patton & McMahon, 1999). Parents have had key roles in facilitating and supporting the development of their children's interests. They have usually tried to inculcate a range of values that they hope will be adopted by their children. These parental roles are not confined to biological parents. Any adult who fulfils the parental role for a young person including carers, mentors and extended family can play an important role in supporting Pathway Planning.

This research found that the level of engagement by parents across schools varied but in general was at a low level. Diversity of family structures and work commitments in the modern world creates challenges for improving engagement but at the very least strategies to improve awareness by parents of Pathway Planning is required. These might include development of newsletter articles, information resources and workshops to encourage parents to discuss their children's future plans with them. Creating opportunities for parents and the PPO to interact is particularly important for some equity groups where it cannot be assumed that students will have the benefit of the encouragement and support of their parents.

Common ways to engage parents include information sessions, career expos, print-based material and specific online resources and workshops. One useful example is the "Parents as Career Partners" run by the Employment Directions Network in Western Australia. Putting in place material that encourages parents to interact at home with the students' Pathway Planning process may also be useful. One principal suggested that parents are the best placed to work with their children on the section of the Year 9 plan where students identify their skills. About one-third of students thought that it would have been advantageous to work through this section with their parents and one student suggested that all students should be asked if they wanted to take that section home to work on with their parents or if they wanted to work through that section with their "mates". A number of parents thought that sitting down with their children and working through bits of the plan would offer them an excellent opportunity to connect with their children.

Recommendation 4: Parental engagement with Pathway Planning should be improved in order to harness parents' support for students in planning their futures.

ENGAGEMENT BY TEACHERS

Research indicates that teachers can play an important role in facilitating student thinking about employment pathways. Teachers can assist students to articulate their aspirations, recognise their strengths, document their skills and achievements and also lend credibility to the Pathway Planning process.

Pathway Planning in Tasmania is being implemented across a culturally diverse educational environment. It is an environment in which the level of commitment and priority given to Pathway Planning varies widely. While there does not appear to be anyone actively working against Pathway Planning there were a number of teachers who admitted to having little understanding of the program and to having little or no idea what the PPOs were working on with their students. It was clear that a few teachers did not understand the difference between Pathway Planning and other initiatives (such as the “No Dole” program run by the Beacon Foundation) that are running in the schools. This confusion has led some teachers to view this initiative as a duplication of services and therefore as one that is not currently serving any real purpose. This research suggests that the effectiveness of the program would be enhanced by increasing understanding of the program and encouraging meaningful involvement by teachers in it.

From this research, it appears that when teachers are aware of the program, are interested in it and the possibilities it offers for their students, the implementation of the program and its outcomes are enhanced. Teachers have indicated a desire for more PD opportunities to learn about the program and have raised a number of learning-based questions to do with sequencing and integration of learning sequences into the curriculum. It was suggested that making a DVD that demonstrated some of the successful ways that learning sequences were being delivered would be a useful way to get the information out to teachers.

PPOs all agreed that for the program to fulfil its potential it needs to be more fully integrated into schools and to be accepted and embraced by teachers. If teachers begin the process in classrooms, students come to the sessions with their PPOs with an understanding of the work at hand. They know why they are there; they understand the vocabulary of the process and are able to more fully engage in the task at hand. If, on the other hand, it is delivered as a stand-alone process the PPOs have to explain enough of the concept of the program for the students to engage in it sufficiently for them to be able to complete their plans.

There are also some reciprocal benefits to be gained by encouraging closer working relationships between PPOs and teachers. PPOs have an extraordinary amount of information about the hopes and dreams of individual students. They also know a lot about the perceived value to students of their classwork and the extent to which this is relevant to their aspirations and future plans. A process for sharing this information (aggregated) would benefit the ongoing development of the curriculum. Engagement of early career teachers in the program could also be encouraged by including the development of a Pathway Planning module for students undertaking the Bachelor of Education and the Bachelor of Teaching at the University of Tasmania.

PPOs would benefit from being involved in the schools communication network and teachers and students would benefit from accessing information that the PPOs have. The PPOs have a wealth of information about individual students and by developing some communication strategies teachers would be able to gain some real insight into their students. Schools would like to have a greater access to their PPOs so that they could work with staff to develop curriculum materials and to enable them to be able to revisit issues with particular students and to offer repeat sessions on some topics.

Recommendation 5: Additional strategies are required to improve current levels of teacher engagement with Pathway Planning and better integrate the program into the life of the school.

ENGAGEMENT BY PRINCIPALS

The culture of schools is such, that for a program like Pathway Planning to be successful it is imperative that the leaders within the school support it, especially during the establishment phase. The researchers noted a wide variance of support by principals, the impact that low levels of support had on the development and integration of Pathway Planning and the high level of integration in schools where principals were advocates for Pathway Planning.

Whilst strong leadership by principals is vital, the success of the program should not be totally dependent on how a principal values the program. The program needs to be an integral part of the school program, supported by the whole school community and as a result less susceptible to the inevitable changes in senior staff. It was suggested by one principal that hearing from their peers (possibly through PD sessions) about Pathway Planning success stories would be an effective strategy for engaging principals. There may be value in encouraging Pathway Planning “champions” among principals to promote the program in other schools and through Principals’ Association meetings. Information about the opportunities presented by the program to contribute to school priorities (e.g. retention) including comparative outcomes to date across all schools could also be provided to principals with a view to engaging their support for the next phase of implementation.

Recommendation 6: Principals should be provided with the information and resources that are required for them to provide leadership within their schools and communities regarding Pathway Planning.

ENGAGEMENT BY STUDENTS

There is no question that students benefit from effective guidance programs and the Pathway Planning process is valued by the students that have participated in it. At the heart of Pathway Planning is a recognition that students face a vast array of decisions in transitioning from secondary school to post-compulsory education and training or employment. In some cases, the decisions students make will ultimately involve relocating to other parts of the state or to the mainland. These are significant and often challenging decisions for the students and their families. The long-term effect of Pathway Planning is that students should be able to demonstrate a capacity to make more informed decisions about their future as they move towards independence.

Whilst there is significant variability in the way in which Pathway Planning has been implemented and is being delivered across the state the focus of the program has been on assisting all students to complete a Pathway Plan and to a large degree this aim appears to have been achieved. Whilst the plan itself has value to the student in helping him or her to take a meaningful place in the world it is also assumed that through the process of completing a plan over three years, the student is acquiring a range of skills. Further research is required to ensure that students are actually building a foundation to make effective life, work and learning decisions in a planful way. It would also be useful to interview students, perhaps a year out from the completion of the first cycle, to determine their perceptions of the effectiveness of current practice.

In its report *What Do Students Think About Work?* the Smith Family found that the plans produced in Year 8 and 9 were impacted by the way in which students perceived themselves. Those students who perceived themselves as below average were more likely to plan to leave school at the end of Year 10. Girls were more likely to plan to complete Year 12. Those who perceived that they had below average levels of achievement at school were more likely to have planned no post-school education (Beavis, 2005a). The report raises some interesting questions that also apply to Pathway Planning in Tasmania. “How do students acquire their accurate or inaccurate perceptions of the world of work, especially concerning the level of education required” (Beavis, 2005a). And why do girls appear to be more informed about the nexus between education and the world of work than boys? These questions illustrate the complexity of what Pathway Planning is trying to achieve.

Recommendation 7: Further research should be undertaken to better understand the student experience of Pathway Planning, the skills being developed through participation in the program and to track student outcomes.

ENGAGEMENT BY BUSINESS AND THE COMMUNITY

As the literature review demonstrates there is research to show the value of involving the broader community, especially business and industry, in Pathway Planning processes. The fact that none of these stakeholders made a formal submission to the review is considered significant by the Project Team and a further indicator of a lack of engagement by industry and business.

The introduction of Pathway Planning has sparked some valuable debates within schools around issues of logistics, parental involvement, training and resources. Suggestions were made to begin the program earlier particularly in relation to retention. The potential for improved connection with Pathway Planning and other career-related programs such as the “Real Game” and Beacon’s “No Dole” program were also raised. However, the review found no evidence that these debates are occurring in the broader community. Students would benefit from opportunities to experience “real life” problem-solving (e.g. Business Challenge simulations) and workplace learning in order to maximise opportunities for them to develop realistic post-school plans and to network within their communities.

Recommendation 8: The support of key educational, community and business leaders should be recruited with a view to engaging them in current the Pathway Planning implementation and plans for its future development.

5.2 EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAM DELIVERY

At present PPOs are from a range of vocational and educational backgrounds as are career development practitioners generally. This diversity of qualifications of PPOs is both a strength and potential weakness. Its strength is that it brings to the program a broad range of skills, experience and backgrounds but all users of such important services are entitled to a minimum standard of service by competent and trained practitioners. In the longer term as more practitioners working in the field of career development gain qualifications in line with the Professional Standards of Australian Career Development Practitioners (CICA, 2006), consideration will need to be given to applying a more consistent minimum qualification. While there is no requirement for PPOs to meet these newly established standards program managers need to ensure that Tasmanian students are being provided with career-related services by staff who have had at least a minimum level of training and qualifications to undertake the work.

PPOs have much to learn from each other. They meet regularly and have formalised training but there is little opportunity for open discussions about how they are getting on, and outside their regions there is little time for sharing information about what is working and what is not. For instance, PPOs in the North have developed a modified version of the Year 9 plan that they use but those working in other areas have not had the opportunity to discuss the potential benefits of this revised plan. The lessons learned through the implementation of the program to date could usefully be captured through a sharing of experiences amongst PPOs and the revision of resources to include exemplars of good practice

Pathway Planning needs to strengthen links to similar programs and given the investment in Career Advice Australia program, potential exists to encourage that program to become a more useful resource for Pathway Planning. Currently trials of the Australian Blueprint for Career Development (Miles Morgan, 2003) is occurring in most states and territories. Findings from this trial may provide a range of resources to complement Pathway Planning. Similarly, there is a growing range of resources related the national employability skills which would also complement Pathway Planning resources.

Recommendation 9: That a comprehensive program of targeted professional development be implemented to ensure that PPOs develop a common set of knowledge, skills and shared vision regarding the implementation of the Pathway Planning program.

PPOs are the key delivery points of Pathway Planning; however, there is a significant variation in the extent to which they feel resourced to perform their tasks. Many PPOs are concerned about both time and resource constraints and they often feel over-stretched and not able to do their jobs properly as a result. PPOs raised concerns about resource constraints such as the availability of a confidential space to meet with students, access to administrative support, access to a networked computer, or access to computers for students to work with in developing their plan or preparing a CV. The researchers noted that some PPOs have private offices with desks and internet facilities so that they are able to have confidential conversations with students and do searches in real time for information on students' interests while others are housed in temporary spaces with no network access and no space for them to set up an interesting and engaging space for students to work in. Having a working space that students can come into during lunch and after school would be ideal. Many students indicated a desire to develop resumes but did not have access to a computer.

A related problem reported by both the students and the PPOs is the scheduling of appointments. "On the day" appointments generally work well, but anything scheduled any further in advance than this is problematic due to student absenteeism. In the case of a PPO who may only be in the school once a week, they may arrive and find that they have no students to meet with. Strategies to counter this need to be devised, to avoid a PPO wasting significant amounts of time on "no show" appointments.

Recommendation 10: To ensure effective and efficient program delivery Pathway Planning Officers should have access to a minimum level of resources including access to a confidential meeting area, administrative support and a networked computer.

PPOs are currently facing large caseloads of approximately 350 students per full-time PPO in addition to meetings and travel to the other schools in which they work. For some who either lack network access, those who work in schools where students do not have easy access to computers, or those who work with students with lower literacy levels there is the additional task of inputting the students plans themselves. PPOs believe that they need to have flexibility in the development of the individual plans. The words “square pegs in round holes” were repeated time and again in relation to working with students whose development and learning style did not fit with the plans as currently developed. It is reported that some students become bored with the plans quite quickly and forcing every student to complete every section of the plan, as it is currently structured, has the potential to become “death by pathways”.

It is clear that all students have different needs and there needs to be a procedure developed that allows PPOs to individualise the learning plans in a way that suits students. Almost universally PPOs would like discretion on how they work with students. If they feel the student needs more or less time or if they believe it is in the best interest of the student to divert away from the plan they would like to be able to do so. They would like the needs of the student to take precedence. There is a range of alternative ways to facilitate student engagement in the completion of their plans to supplement individualised interventions but these were not generally being used by PPOs. Their almost exclusive focus on one-to-one interviews is limiting opportunities for more efficient approaches to service delivery.

Like all individual intensive programs, Pathway Planning in its current iteration leaves limited time for the PPO to build other activities and services which might impact positively on the quality of the students’ plans. Flexibility to develop a range of approaches is also likely to ensure the ongoing development of Pathway Planning and ensure the work of the PPOs is challenging and leading edge. Where PPOs concentrate on the processes of the plan rather than the skill development of the individual to build a plan it is likely that over time the value of Pathway Planning will be diluted. The plan by itself is one necessary outcome but the overall development of the individual through Pathway Planning is critical to the quality of the outcome.

Addressing the issue of how PPOs apportion time to individual, group and other developmental activities is vital. One important step in the development of a sustainable program would be to trial the effectiveness of alternative delivery strategies.

These could include experiential and work-integrated learning activities; wider use of assessment tools, online programs; shared delivery of learning sequences between PPOs, teachers and external stakeholders; mentoring programs; or activities based around key competencies indicated in the Australian Blueprint for Career Development. Each of these examples has the potential to enhance the skill level of the student and improve the quality of their Pathway Plans.

Involvement in more varied work tasks would bring the added benefit of increased job satisfaction. To do this requires a cultural shift in schools in relation to the way in which they support Pathway Planning. Improvement in time and resources could be achieved with greater linkages between teachers, parents, the students and the PPOs.

Recommendation 11: Reduce caseloads to a sustainable level and investigate and trial flexible delivery options to enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of the program.

5.3 SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITY

A number of equity considerations emerged in relation to the diverse needs of students and the additional challenges faced by some schools, particularly those in rural and isolated areas. The difficulties associated with living in an isolated community or of having a disability for instance, impact on the pathways that students might consider, and additional support is required to provide these students with equitable opportunities.

It is clear that the Pathway Planning program as currently designed and implemented is not meeting the needs of certain groups of students as well as others. Some students, by virtue of the school that they are lucky enough to attend, are getting a very rich experience through Pathway Planning while others are getting the bare minimum. For instance, at the beginning of the 2006 academic year Huonville High School began offering their Year 10 students Pathway Planning, using the Year 9 resource, so that they would not be missing out on what they saw as vital information. Similarly, it was clear that students from the larger schools, that have a PPO in the school for more time during a week, were better able to demonstrate what they have gained from Pathway Planning. Most students were able to articulate their post-Year 10 plans, but those students who are fortunate to have had the opportunity for a richer experience were also able to explain what barriers they may face and what other options are available to them.

There is a danger that students who are partially disengaged from the other aspects of their schooling will also participate less in Pathway Planning. For instance those students who have behavioural problems and are disengaged from school are also difficult to locate as they are absent from school quite often. Due to tight timeframes it makes it difficult to take the extra time required to locate these students. There was also some evidence that support teachers have sometimes advised students that Pathway Planning would not be worthwhile for them. This is contrary to research that indicates that these students in particular should have the opportunity to participate. There has been some criticism particularly of the Year 9 resource kit and its length particularly in relation to students with literacy issues. The suggestion was made that an adapted package was needed to meet the needs of these students.

Students at serious risk of disengagement do get picked up by Guaranteeing Futures YLOs or programs such as Youth Pathways run by Colony 47, but given the number of newly arrived refugees and CALD students that are currently attending schools in Tasmania, a way to work with this select group of students in a way that is advantageous to them needs to be developed.

The Project Team did not find evidence of a strong commitment to inclusive approaches to the implementation of Pathway Planning. In this formative stage in which a number of approaches are being trialled this was not identified as a major problem. However, greater attention will need to be given to implementing sustainable strategies for meeting the needs of various equity groups (especially students with disabilities and rural and isolated students) in the next stage of development of Pathway Planning.

Students from isolated schools face a number of problems that students from more urban schools do not. The resolution of many of these issues is beyond the scope of Pathway Planning. However, the program can contribute and act as a catalyst to improving the overall student experience. For example, students from schools that are isolated miss out on the opportunity to attend as many industry visits or if they travel there are additional costs incurred by the program. To engage fully in the program students ideally should have access to the PPO on an as-needs basis but in some isolated schools there is not even a weekly presence. While there are a number of programs operating in schools to address some of these problems, this in itself creates issues of coordination. Isolated schools may have at least four different people coming into the school to work with students.

There are crossovers with many of these programs and it would afford more continuity if just one person were able to deliver all of the services. This would allow children to develop a good working relationship with the students, minimise the disruption to class time and would hopefully eliminate students repeatedly being asked the same questions by a number of people who are not talking to each other or sharing information.

Recommendation 12: The additional resource requirements associated with working with students in isolated regions or with higher support requirements (e.g. students with disabilities) be recognised and addressed.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this review give rise to a number of recommendations for consideration in the further development of Pathway Planning.

Recommendation 1: Clear program objectives, performance indicators and benchmarks are necessary to facilitate ongoing evaluation of the program.

Recommendation 2: An ongoing program of evaluative research be developed to monitor the effectiveness and impact of Pathway Planning.

Recommendation 3: An induction program to engage with schools and their communities should be implemented to ensure that the Pathway Planning program is integrated into the life of the school community.

Recommendation 4: Parental engagement with Pathway Planning should be improved in order to harness parents' support for students in planning their futures.

Recommendation 5: Additional strategies are required to improve current levels of teacher engagement with Pathway Planning and better integrate the program into the life of the school.

Recommendation 6: Principals should be provided with the information and resources that are required for them to provide leadership within their schools and communities regarding Pathway Planning.

Recommendation 7: Further research should be undertaken to better understand the student experience of Pathway Planning, the skills being developed through participation in the program and to track student outcomes.

Recommendation 8: The support of key educational, community and business leaders should be recruited with a view to engaging them in current Pathway Planning implementation and plans for its future development.

Recommendation 9: That a comprehensive program of targeted professional development be implemented to ensure that PPOs develop a common set of knowledge, skills and shared vision regarding the implementation of the Pathway Planning program.

Recommendation 10: To ensure effective and efficient program delivery Pathway Planners should have access to a minimum level of resources including access to a confidential meeting area, administrative support and a networked computer.

Recommendation 11: Reduce caseloads to a sustainable level and investigate and trial flexible delivery options to enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of the program.

Recommendation 12: The additional resource requirements associated with working with students in isolated regions or with higher support requirements (e.g. students with disabilities) be recognised and addressed.

7. REFERENCES

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (2001–2005), *6278.0 Education and Training Experience* (Canberra: ABS).
- Access Economics (2006), *The Economic Benefits of Career Services* (Melbourne: CICA).
- Allen Consulting Group (2003), *Overview of Transition Programs: Policies and Programs* (Melbourne: Business Council of Australia).
- Alfred, G., Garvey, R. & Smith, R. (1998), “*Pas de Deux - Learning in Conversation*”, *Career Development International*, 3(7): 308.
- Armstrong, P.I. & Crombie, G. (2000), “*Compromises in adolescents’ occupational aspirations and expectations from grades 8 to 10*”, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 56: 82–98.
- Atelier Learning Solutions (2004), *Essential Learnings For All*, Department of Education, Tasmania, <http://www.education.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/83173/finalreport-june29.pdf> (accessed 21 March 2007).
- Arthur, N. & McMahon, M. (2005), “*Multicultural Career Counseling: Theoretical Applications of the Systems Theory Framework*”, *Career Development Quarterly*, 53(3): 208–222.
- Australian Government (2006), *WorkChoices: A New Workplace Relations System*, retrieved from <<http://www.workchoices.gov.au/ourplan/legislation/>> (accessed 1 April 2007).
- Beavis, A., Curtis, D. & Curtis, N. (2005a), *What Do Students Think About Work? Are They on the Right Page? Junior Secondary School Students’ Perception of the World of Work* (Sydney: The Smith Family).
- Beavis, A., Curtis, D. & Curtis, N. (2005b), *What Do Students Know About Work? Senior Secondary School Students’ Perception of the World of Work* (Sydney: The Smith Family).
- Bedson, L. & Perkins, D. (2006), *A Positive Influence: Equipping Parents to Support Young People’s Career Transitions* (Melbourne: Brotherhood of St Laurence).
- Brott, P.E. (2004), “*A Constructivist’s Look at Career Life Roles*”, *Career Development Quarterly*, 49: 304–313.
- Canadian National Steering Committee for Career Development Guidelines and Standards (2004), *Canadian Career Development Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners*, <<http://www.career-dev-guidelines.org/>> (accessed 30 March 2007).
- Careers Scotland (2007), *Creating the Evidence Base*, Careers Scotland, <<http://www.iccdpp.org/tabid/92/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/27/Careers-Scotland-Creating-the-Evidence-Base.aspx>> (accessed 21 March 2007).
- Careers Scotland (2002), *Career Goals and Educational Attainment: What Is the Link?*, Careers Scotland, <<http://www.careers-scotland.org.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=9358&SID=1164>> (accessed 21 March 2007).
- Chen, C.P. (2005), “*Counsellor and Teacher Collaboration in Classroom-based Career Guidance*”, *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 14(3): 18.
- CICA (2006), *Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners* (Melbourne: CICA).
- Connexions (2002), *Guidance on Professional Practice for Connexions Personal Advisers* (Nottingham, UK).

- CoAG (Council of Australian Governments) (2006), *Human Capital Reform Report*, retrieved from <http://www.coag.gov.au/meetings/100206/human_capital_reform_report_COAG_100206.rtf> (accessed 12 January 2007).
- Council of The European Union (2004a), *Press Release: Education Youth and Culture* <http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/educ/80643.pdf> (accessed 12 January 2007).
- (2004b), *Draft Resolution on Lifelong Guidance 9286/04*, retrieved from <http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/resolution2004_en.pdf>.
- Dahir, C.A. (2001), “*Career Planning in Middle School*”, *The Education Digest*, 67(4): 65.
- Department of Education, Tasmania (2003), *Tasmania: A State of Learning: A Strategy for Post Year 10 Education and Training* (Hobart: Department of Education).
- Department of Treasury (2002), *Budget Paper No. 5: Intergenerational Report 2002-03* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia).
- Evans, J.H. & Burck, H.D. (1992), “*The Effects of Career Education Interventions on Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis*”, *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 71: 63–68.
- Ford, G.C. (2006), “*Panel Urges More Career Planning; Preparation Should Begin in High School*”, *Knight Ridder Tribune Business News*: 1.
- Gottfredson, L.S. (1981) “*Circumscription and Compromise: a Developmental Theory of Occupational Aspirations*”, *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 28(6): 545–79.
- Gottfredson, L.S. (1996), “*Gottfredson's Theory of Circumscription and Compromise*” in: *Career Choice and Development*, 3rd edn, edited by D. Brown & L. Brooks, pp. 179-232 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass).
- Grubb, N. (2002), *Who I am: The inadequacy of career information in the information age*. Retrieved from <www.oecd.org/dataoecd/32/35/1954678.pdf> (accessed 1 April 2007).
- Hargrove, B., Inman, A. & Crane, R. (2005), “*Family Interaction Patterns, Career Planning Attitudes, and Vocational Identity of High School Adolescents*”, *Journal of Career Development*, 31(4): 263.
- Hayslip, J.B. & VanZandt, Z. (2000), “*Using National Standards and Models of Excellence as Frameworks for Accountability*”, *Journal of Career Development*, 27: 81–87.
- Herr, E.L., Cramer, S.H. & Niles, S.G. (2004), *Career Guidance and Counseling through the Lifespan: Systematic Approaches* (6th edn) (Needham Heights: Allyn & Bacon).
- House Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training (2004), *Learning to Work: Report on the Inquiry into Vocational Education in Schools* (Canberra: Parliament of Australia).
- Hughes, C. & Thomas, T. (2003), “*The Family's Influence on Adolescent and Young Adult Career Development: Theory, Research and Practice*”, *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 12(2): 38–46.
- Iowa Department of Education (2004), *Iowa District Career Development Plan*, retrieved from <<http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/view/232/637/>> (accessed March 2007).
- Kellock, P. (2002), “*The Role and Effectiveness of Transition Workers*”, *Transition Worker Review*, retrieved from <http://www.dsf.org.au/real/downloads/TransitionBr_PKellock_NOV02.pdf> (accessed 1 April 2007).
- Knight, A. & Nestor, M. (2000), *A Glossary of Australian Vocational Education and Training terms* (Adelaide: National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd).

- Longden, B. (2006), "An Institutional Response to Changing Student Expectations and Their Impact on Retention Rates", *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 28(2): 173–187.
- Marsh, E. & Macdonald, F. (2002), *Report on the Youth Focus Groups on Realising Australia's Commitment to Young People* (Melbourne: ATEC Equity Research Centre).
- McIlveen, P., Ford, T. & Everton, B. (2005), "Facilitating Transition from Rural Schools to University", *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 14(1): 11.
- McMahon, M. & Watson, M. (2005), "Occupational Information: What Children Want to Know", *Journal of Career Development*, 31(4): 239.
- MCEETYA (Ministerial Council for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (1998), *National Principles for Career Education* (Canberra: MCEETYA).
- (1999), *The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century* (Canberra: MCEETYA).
- (2000a), *New Pathways for Learning: Report of the MCEETYA Taskforce on Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Schools* (Canberra: MCEETYA).
- (2000b), *New Framework for Vocational Education in Schools: A Comprehensive Guide about Pathways for Young Australians in Transition* (Canberra: MCEETYA).
- MCEETYA Taskforce on VET in Schools (2000), *Summary of Survey Jurisdictions Re: Career Information and Guidance, and Access to Student Services*. Unpublished report.
- Miles Morgan Australia (2003), *The Australian Blueprint for Career Development* (Canberra: DEST).
- Mission Australia (2006), *National Survey of Young Australians 2006: Key and Emerging Issue*, retrieved from <<http://www.mission.com.au/cm/p.aspx?n=JSEMK-PNNGX-ORHRR-QCOMM-BEROJ>> (accessed 1 April 2007).
- Myrick, R.D. & Carrow, P.A. (1987), "Teacher Involvement in Career Education and Advisement: Ready or Not?", *Journal of Career Development*, 14(2): 108–117.
- Ontario Ministry of Education and Training (1999), *Choices Into Action: Guidance and Career Education Program Policy for Ontario Elementary and Secondary Schools* (Ontario: Ministry of Education and Training).
- OECD (Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development) (1996), *Mapping the Future: Young People & Career Guidance* (Paris: OECD).
- (1997), *Thematic Review of the Transition from Initial Education to Working Life: Australia* (Paris: OECD).
- (1999), *The Transition from Initial Education to Working Life* (Paris: OECD).
- (2002), *Why Career Information, Guidance and Counselling Matter for Public Policy, Working Draft 1* (Paris: OECD).
- (2002), *OECD Review of Career Guidance and Public Policy – Australian Country note*, retrieved from <http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/career_development/policy_issues_reviews/policy_issues_reviews_menu.htm> (accessed 21 March 2007).
- (2004a), *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap* (Paris: OECD).
- (2004b), *Career Guidance – A Handbook for Policy Makers* (OECD: Paris).
- (2005) *Education at a Glance*, http://www.oecd.org/document/34/0,2340,en_2649_34515_35289570_1_1_1_1,00.html (accessed 1 April 2007).

- OECD Centre for Education Research and Innovation (2001), *Education Policy Analysis: 2001 Edition* (Paris: OECD).
- Otto, L.B. (2000), "Youth Perspectives on Parental Career Influence", *Journal of Career Development*, 27: 111–118.
- Patton, W. & McMahon, M. (2006), *Career Development and Systems Theory*, 2nd edn (Rotterdam: Sense).
- Peavy, R.V. (1998), *SocioDynamic Counselling: a Constructivist Perspective* (Canada: Trafford).
- Prime Minister's Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce (2001), *Footprints to the Future: Report from the Prime Minister's Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce* (Canberra: DEST).
- Productivity Commission (2007), *Potential Benefits of the National Reform Agenda* (Canberra: Productivity Commission).
- Savickas, M.L. (1997), "Career Adaptability: An Integrative Construct for Life-Span, Life-Space Theory", *Career Development Quarterly*, 45(3): 247–259.
- Savickas, M.L. (2000), "Renovating the Psychology of Careers for the Twenty-first Century", in: *The Future of Career*, edited by A. Collin & R.A. Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- Sears, S.J. (1995), "Career and Educational Planning in the Middle-Level School", *National Association of Secondary School Principals. NASSP Bulletin*, 79(570): 36.
- Smith, E. & Green, A. (2005), *How Workplace Experiences While at School Affect Career Pathways* (Adelaide: NCVET).
- Spierings, J. (2001), *Regional and Local Government Initiatives to Support Youth Pathways: Lessons from Innovative Communities*. ACER: Understanding of Youth Pathways Conference. Melbourne, October 2001.
- Spierings, J. (2005), "Young People at Risk in the Transition from Education to Work", *A.B.S. Australian Social Trends*, 4102.0.
- Sweet, R. (1998), "Youth: The Rhetoric and the Reality of the 1990s", in: *Dusseldorp Skills Forum* (ed.), *Australia's Youth: Reality and Risk*: 5–22. Dusseldorp Skills Forum.
- Turner, D. (2006), *Engaging Parents in the Career Development of Young People*, unpublished DET WA report, retrieved from < <http://iccdpp.org/Home/Newsfeeds/tabid/83/Default.aspx><http://www.iccdpp.org/tabid/92/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/15/Default.aspx> > (accessed 31 March 2007).
- Turner, S.L. & Lapan, R.T. (2003), "The Measurement of Career Interests Among At-risk Inner-city and Middle-class Suburban Adolescents", *Journal of Career Assessment*, 11(3): 405–420.

APPENDIX A

REVIEW OF PATHWAY PLANNING PATHWAY PLANNING OFFICERS' SURVEY



ABOUT THIS SURVEY

The Department of Education has contracted the University of Tasmania to review the initial implementation of the Pathway Planning initiative.

The objectives of the review are to:

- Review the range of approaches implemented during the first 18 months of operation of the Pathway Planning project
- Identify the most effective of these to inform the future development and evaluation of the project in subsequent years.

The criteria that are being used to measure the effectiveness of Pathway Planning to date are engagement by students, parents and schools; effectiveness of the Pathways Plan and implementation process; and sustainability and equity of the program.

As part of this review the University is seeking feedback from Pathways Planning Officers about the program. This survey is being sent to all PPOs and will be followed up by individual interviews in some schools and focus groups.

Participation is encouraged but it is entirely voluntary and all responses will be treated confidentially.

If you would like further information please contact Project Officer Joyce Johnston on 6226 7264 or by email at joyce.johnston@utas.edu.au

This study has received ethics approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tas) Network.

Please return to Joyce via email by the 31st of August.

REVIEW OF PATHWAY PLANNING
PATHWAY PLANNING OFFICERS' SURVEY



DEVELOPING THE PLAN

1. What processes are in place to enable you to meet with students to work with them?
2. Over a year how many regular meetings and at what intervals would it take to complete the Year 8 plans in a way that keeps/kept students involved?
3. Over a year how many regular meetings and at what intervals would it take to complete the Year 9 plans in a way that keeps/kept students involved?
4. To what extent is building a relationship with students important to the development of an effective Pathway Plan?
Very important Quite important Not very important
5. How much time does this take and what strategies do you use to achieve this relationship?
6. What elements are essential to the development of an effective Pathway Plan?
7. To what extent are these elements available in your school/s?
8. Do you usually see Year 8 students, individually, in pairs or in groups and why?
(Circle one or more)
9. Do you usually see Year 9 students, individually, in pairs or in groups and why?
(Circle one or more)
10. Where and when do you work with Year 8 students?
(classroom, office space, hours, time subjects)
11. Describe where and when you work with Year 9 students?
(e.g.classroom, office space, lunchtime, during class time)
12. What materials and approaches are you using to assist students to develop their Year 8 Pathway Plan?
13. What materials and approaches are you using to assist students to develop their Year 9 Pathway Plan?
14. Which of the above materials and approaches have you found to be most effective in working with students?

15. How do you judge which methods are more effective than others?
16. What support is available to you in working with students with more complex needs?
17. Please describe the flexibility, if any, that you have in working with students in the development of their Pathway Plans?
18. How effective is the Year 8 resource material, and support resources you might use with students, as presently designed?
- Very ineffective 1 2 3 4 5 Very effective
19. How effective is the Year 9 resource material, and support resources you might use with students, as presently designed?
- Very ineffective 1 2 3 4 5 Very effective
20. Is the plan meeting the needs of Year 8 students?
- No 1 2 3 4 5 Yes very well
21. Is the plan meeting the needs of Year 9 students?
- No 1 2 3 4 5 Yes very well

ENGAGEMENT WITH STUDENTS, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

22. What strategies do you use to engage students and maintain this engagement during the development of their Pathway Plan?
23. What parts of the Pathway Planning process do you think the Year 8 students are most engaged in or find most useful?
24. What parts of the Pathway Planning process do you think the Year 9 students are most engaged in or find most useful?
25. If there are any barriers you face in engaging students in a meaningful ongoing pathway planning process can you explain what those are?
26. In what ways have the schools that you work in, included the Pathway Planning learning sequences into their curriculum?
27. In what ways are teachers accessing and using the Pathway Plans?
28. To what extent are you included in the communication processes within the school?
- Very well Moderately well OK Not very well What communication

29. What has been done in the schools in which you work to let parents know about Pathway Planning?
30. Please describe if and how you have been involved with the parents of the students you have been working with.
31. How do you work with the VELDO in your region?
32. How well is the program meeting the needs of:

	1 Poorly	2	3	4	5 Very Well	n/a
Rural and Remote students						
Newly arrived refugee students						
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) students						
Indigenous students						
Students with disabilities						
Students at risk of disengagement or non attenders						
Students who are non attenders						

OUTCOMES

33. What do you feel are the most successful elements of Pathway Planning?
34. What factors impact on the successful delivery of Pathway Planning?
35. How many instances can you recall of Year 8 students choosing courses in Year 9 based on the work they did on their plans in Year 8? Can you tell us about them?
36. Please describe what opportunities you have had to feedback to teachers and schools information identified through the Pathway Planning process that could enhance student learning.
37. Please describe one or more instances where teachers changed how they work with a student as a result of the Pathway Planning process.
38. Please describe any particular examples of actions students have taken as a result of Pathway Planning that will contribute to the self management of their futures?
39. Has Pathway Planning increased students' awareness of future work options? If yes can you give an example?

ABOUT YOU

40. What skills/experience have been particularly useful in your current position as a Pathway Planning Officer?
41. Which aspects of the training you received as a Pathway Planning Officer has been most useful in supporting you in doing your current job?
42. If you had extra time available what would you use it for?
43. If you could improve one element of Pathway Planning, what would it be?
44. What do you believe to be the main challenges PPOs face?
45. What has been the highlight of your job as a Pathway Planning Officer?

Any other comments?

Thank you. Your contributions to this evaluation process are much appreciated.

Please save this document and email it to: joyce.johnston@utas.edu.au

APPENDIX B

REVIEW OF PATHWAY PLANNING PRINCIPALS' SURVEY



ABOUT THIS SURVEY

The Department of Education's Office of Post-Compulsory Education and Training has contracted the University of Tasmania to review the initial implementation of the Pathway Planning initiative.

The objectives of the review are to:

- Review the range of approaches implemented during the first 18 months of operation of the Pathway Planning project
- Identify the most effective of these to inform the future development and evaluation of the project in subsequent years.

The criteria that are being used to measure the effectiveness of Pathway Planning to date are engagement by students, parents and schools; effectiveness of the Pathways Plan and implementation process; and sustainability and equity of the program.

As part of this review the University is seeking feedback from Principals about the program. This survey is being sent to all Principals and will be followed up by individual interviews in 10 schools.

Participation is encouraged but it is entirely voluntary and all responses will be treated confidentially.

If you would like further information please contact Project Officer Joyce Johnston on 6226 7264 or by email at joyce.johnston@utas.edu.au

This study has received ethics approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tas) Network.

Please return to Joyce via email by the 6th of October.

REVIEW OF PATHWAY PLANNING PRINCIPALS' SURVEY



DEVELOPING THE PLAN

1. How is Pathway Planning being implemented in your school?
2. How does your school support the Pathway Planning Officer's work?
3. How well has your school been supported to develop an understanding of Pathway Planning?
Very well Moderately well OK Not very well Poorly
4. What support is available to the Pathway Planning Officer in working with students with more complex needs?

ENGAGEMENT WITH STUDENTS, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

5. If there are any barriers you believe Pathway Planning Officers face in engaging with students in a meaningful ongoing Pathway Planning process can you explain what those are?
6. In what way has your school, included the Learning Sequences from the My Plan for My future into the curriculum?
7. Have you made any structural or organizational changes in response to the Pathway Planning initiative? Can you tell us about them?
8. To what extent does your school include the PPO in the communication processes within the school?
Very well Moderately well OK Not very well Poorly
9. What has been done in your school to let parents know about Pathway Planning and how effective do you believe that has been?
10. How does the school inform the PPO that works in your school if a particular student needs additional support?

OUTCOMES

11. What have been the positive outcomes of Pathway Planning in your school?
12. What do you feel are the most successful elements of Pathway Planning?
13. What factors impact on the successful delivery of Pathway Planning in your school?

14. What impact has Pathway Planning had in your school?

15. How satisfied are you with the way the PPO works in your school?

Very well Moderately well OK Not very well Poorly

ABOUT YOU

16. If you could improve one element of Pathway Planning what would it be?

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Thank you. Your contributions to this evaluation process are much appreciated.

Please save this document and email it to: joyce.johnston@utas.edu.au

APPENDIX C

ADVERTISEMENT IN STATE NEWSPAPERS

REVIEW OF THE PATHWAY PLANNING PROGRAM CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The University of Tasmania is currently conducting a review of the Pathway Planning Program which was implemented in Year 8 classes of all Tasmanian public high schools in 2005. Pathway Planning is an element of the State Government's Guaranteeing Futures program.

Submissions to the review are invited from all interested persons and groups and should be received no later than close of business on Friday, September 22. Submissions should be addressed to Mr Tony Payne, University of Tasmania Private Bag 2, Hobart 7001 or emailed to tony.payne@utas.edu.au

More information about the review may be obtained from Ms Joyce Johnston on 6226 7264 or email joyce.johnston@utas.edu.au or may be viewed online at www.utas.edu.au/services/review

All submissions will be treated confidentially.

APPENDIX D



RESULTS AND COMMENTS FROM PATHWAY PLANNING OFFICERS' SURVEY

DEVELOPING THE PLAN

1. What processes are in place to enable you to meet with students to work with them?
 - Appointments made in class or timetabled 26
 - Access to students in groups 1
 - In a private office 1
 - Other 6

2. Over a year how many regular meetings and at what intervals would it take to complete the Year 8 plans in a way that keeps/kept students involved?
 - 1 Double period 5
 - 1 meeting per term 20
 - 4-6 2
 - 7-10 2
 - Work through class on a rotational basis 3

3. Over a year how many regular meetings and at what intervals would it take to complete the Year 9 plans in a way that keeps/kept students involved?
 - 1 Double period 1
 - 1 meeting per term 14
 - 4-6 9
 - 7-10 4
 - Work through class on a rotational basis 3

4. To what extent is building a relationship with students important to the development of an effective Pathway Plan?

Very important: 25 Quite important: 3 Not very important 0

5. How much time does this take and what strategies do you use to achieve this relationship?
 - Takes 2-3 meetings 5
 - Rapport/relationship building 22
 - Support from staff 1
 - Sufficient time 18
 - Other 13

6. What elements are essential to the development of an effective Pathway Plan?
 - Relationship 19
 - Teacher support 11
 - Learning sequences being delivered in class 9
 - Sufficient time 9
 - Other 17
7. To what extent are these elements available in your school/s?
 - I have very good support 5
 - Teachers have not taken it on 4
 - Senior staff have accepted it 1
 - It varies 7
 - Other 13
8. Do you usually see Year 8 students, individually, in pairs or in groups and why?
 - Single students 14
 - Pairs 22
 - Groups of 3 9
 - Class activity 2
9. Do you usually see Year 9 students, individually, in pairs or in groups and why?
 - Single students 18
 - Pairs 24
 - Groups of 3 5
 - Class activity 5
10. Where and when do you work with Year 8 students (classroom, office space, hours, time subjects)?
 - Sectioned off classroom 5
 - Careers room 2
 - Own office 28
 - Library 6
 - Other 7
11. Describe where and when you work with Year 9 students (e.g. classroom, office space, lunchtime, during class time)?
 - Sectioned off classroom 4
 - Careers room 4
 - Own office 30
 - Library 5
 - Other 8

12. What materials and approaches are you using to assist students to develop their Year 8 Pathway Plan?
 - Career quiz questions/ Skills/Strengths cards 11
 - Pathway Plan/My Plan for My Future 17
 - Job guide/Industry Pathway information/TAFE guides 12
 - Conversations 13
 - Internet 14
13. What materials and approaches are you using to assist students to develop their Year 9 Pathway Plan?
 - Career quiz questions/ Skills/Strengths cards 13
 - Pathway Plan/My Plan for My Future 17
 - Job guide/Industry Pathway information/TAFE guides 12
 - Conversations 12
 - Internet 15
14. Which of the above materials and approaches have you found to be most effective in working with students?
 - Conversations 13
 - Job juice 7
 - Career wheels 4
 - My Plan for My Future 8
 - Other 16
15. How do you judge which methods are more effective than others?
 - Student response 24
 - Enthusiasm 4
16. What support is available to you in working with students with more complex needs?
 - Social worker 2
 - Teacher aides 14
 - Guidance officer 1
 - Grade coordinator 1
 - Other 16
17. Please describe the flexibility, if any, that you have in working with students in the development of their Pathway Plans?
 - A lot 14
 - Typing transcribing. Me or the students 1
 - What flexibility? 8
 - Other 7

18. How effective is the Year 8 resource material, and support resources you might use with students, as presently designed?

Very ineffective 1: 1 2: 2 3: 10 4: 14 5: 2 Very effective

19. How effective is the Year 9 resource material, and support resources you might use with students, as presently designed?

Very ineffective 1: 3 2: 3 3: 9 4: 9 5: 4 Very effective

20. Is the plan meeting the needs of Year 8 students?

No 1: 1 2: 2 3: 6 4: 13 5: 6 Yes very well

21. Is the plan meeting the needs of Year 9 students?

No 1: 1 2: 7 3: 10 4: 5 5: 4 Yes very well

ENGAGEMENT WITH STUDENTS, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

22. What strategies do you use to engage students and maintain this engagement during the development of their Pathway Plan?

- Talk to them
- Computer based searches
- Being attentive
- Make sure students know that this is about them

23. What parts of the Pathway Planning process do you think the Year 8 students are most engaged in or find most useful?

- Goal setting page 5
- Developing their awareness of range of careers 2
- What are my dreams 11
- What would I like to be better at 3
- Other 18

24. What parts of the Pathway Planning process do you think the Year 9 students are most engaged in or find most useful?

- Work exploration 17
- Skills and attributes 7
- My vision 6
- Other 9

25. If there are any barriers you face in engaging students in a meaningful ongoing pathway planning process can you explain what those are?

- Workload 7
- Problems with the Year 9 plan 6
- Engagement with at risk students 16
- Lack of support or commitment by teachers/school 9
- Other 5

26. In what ways have the schools that you work in, included the Pathway Planning learning sequences into their curriculum?
- Some teachers are not doing it well 4
 - A class is dedicated to the subject 5
 - All sequences delivered 4
 - Some sequences delivered 9
 - Not at all 9
27. In what ways are teachers accessing and using the Pathway Plans?
- Not looked at them 13
 - Feedback is given to teachers on individual students 2
 - Sharepoint and learning sequences folder 4
 - Some students see them as private and do not want the teacher accessing them 2
 - Other 7
28. To what extent are you included in the communication processes within the school?
Very well: 5 Moderately well: 7 Ok: 7 Not very well: 6 What communication: 3
29. What has been done in the schools in which you work to let parents know about Pathway Planning?
- Articles in school newsletters 27
 - Parent information session 14
 - Letter home 7
 - Minimal 11
30. Please describe if and how you have been involved with the parents of the students you have been working with.
- Parent information session 12
 - Parent enquiry 5
 - I have not been directly involved with parents 4
 - None 11
 - Letters to families 2
31. How do you work with the VELDO in your region?
- The VELDO supports my work 15
 - Excellent/supportive and respectful 4
 - Minimal contact/ do not see or hear from them often 3
 - Bad working relationship 5
 - Other 8

32. How well is the program meeting the needs of:

	1 Poorly	2	3	4	5 Very Well	n/a
Rural and Remote students	1	3	4	8	6	5
Newly arrived refugee students	1	2	2	1	2	18
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) students	3	2	1	3	2	15
Indigenous students	0	2	4	8	6	6
Students with disabilities	2	4	9	3	6	2
Students at risk of disengagement or non attenders	5	8	4	6	3	0
Students who are non attenders	12	7	1	2	0	4

OUTCOMES

33. What do you feel are the most successful elements of Pathway Planning?

- Work exploration 7
- Skills 3
- Goal setting 4
- Conversations 13
- Students taking ownership of their futures 13

34. What factors impact on the successful delivery of Pathway Planning?

- PPO skills and personality 6
- Large numbers and not enough time 8
- Too much admin work 8
- The learning sequences being delivered in class/commitment by teachers 1
- Office space/access to resources 22

35. How many instances can you recall of Year 8 students choosing courses in Year 9 based on the work they did on their plans in Year 8? Can you tell us about them?

36. Please describe what opportunities you have had to feedback to teachers and schools information identified through the Pathway Planning process that could enhance student learning.

- I make general comments 4
- Feedback is given when needed 9
- Meet with grade teams 3
- Feedback after each session 1
- None 9

37. Please describe one or more instances where teachers changed how they work with a student as a result of the Pathway Planning process.

38. Please describe any particular examples of actions students have taken as a result of Pathway Planning that will contribute to the self management of their futures?

39. Has Pathway Planning increased students' awareness of future work options? If yes can you give an example?

ABOUT YOU

40. What skills/experience have been particularly useful in your current position as a Pathway Planning Officer?
- Interpersonal skills 23
 - Case management 8
 - Admin skills 6
 - Initiative 7
 - Careers knowledge 17
41. Which aspects of the training you received as a Pathway Planning officer has been most useful in supporting you in doing your current job?
- PD on poverty 3
 - Industry liaison 4
 - Training around the plan itself 11
 - Shadowing other PPOs 8
 - How to work in schools 2
42. If you had extra time available what would you use it for?
- Relevant industry visits 5
 - More time with students 18
 - Guest speakers 4
 - More investigation on looking for an applying for jobs 11
 - Other 12
43. If you could improve one element of Pathway Planning, what would it be?
- Lower number of students we see 9
 - Reduce/condense Year 9 plan 8
 - Less paper work 3
 - Teachers taking it on board 5
 - Other 7
44. What do you believe to be the main challenges PPOs face?
- Making sure you spend equal time with students 1
 - Lack of time 15
 - Work not being valued or respected in schools 7
 - Learning sequences not being delivered in classrooms 6
 - Other 5

45. What has been the highlight of your job as a Pathway Planning Officer?

Any other comments?

Thank you. Your contributions to this evaluation process are much appreciated.

Please save this document and email it to: joyce.johnston@utas.edu.au

APPENDIX E



RESULTS AND COMMENTS FROM PRINCIPALS' SURVEY

REVIEW OF PATHWAY PLANNING PRINCIPALS' SURVEY

DEVELOPING THE PLAN

1. How is Pathway Planning being implemented in your school?
 - Timetabled lessons 5
 - PPO is in school 1 day per fortnight 1
 - Small amount of time spent on in it Pastoral Care 1
 - Real Game 2
 - Team approach 1
2. How does your school support the Pathway Planning Officers' work?
 - Timetabled lessons 2
 - Provide office space 6
 - Limited admin support 1
3. How well has your school been supported to develop an understanding of Pathway Planning?
 Very well: 4 Moderately well: 4 Ok: 2 Not very well: 2 Poorly: 1
4. What support is available to the Pathway Planning Officer in working with students with more complex needs?
 - Support from grade team 3
 - Student aides 3
 - Briefing 1
 - IEP 2

ENGAGEMENT WITH STUDENTS, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

5. If there are any barriers you believe Pathway Planning officers face in engaging with students in a meaningful ongoing Pathway Planning process can you explain what those are?
 - Guaranteeing Futures 1
 - PD for teachers 1
 - Time 5
 - Learning sequences not understood well/ Profile needs to be raised 3
 - Movement of PPOs 1

6. In what way has your school, included the Learning Sequences from the My Plan for My future into the curriculum?
- Have not done it 1
 - Limited/sporadic 4
 - Have informed teachers of the availability 2
 - Planning on doing it in the future 2
 - Regular delivery 2
7. Have you made any structural or organizational changes in response to the Pathway Planning initiative? Can you tell us about them?
- Timetabled lesson 2
 - No need 2
 - No 6
8. To what extent does your school include the PPO in the communication processes within the school?
- Very well: 1 Moderately well: 3 Ok Not very well: 3 Poorly: 1
9. What has been done in your school to let parents know about Pathway Planning and how effective do you believe that has been?
- Newsletter 6
 - Parents nights/ Parents association 6
 - Community events/Careers expo 1
 - Very little 3
10. How does the school inform the PPO that works in your school if a particular student needs additional support?
- Email or personal contact 8
 - Informally 2

OUTCOMES

11. What have been the positive outcomes of Pathway Planning in your school?
- Partnership with community 1
 - Clearer views about career plans 3
 - Clearer understanding of courses of study 1
 - Students thinking about their futures 3
 - Engagement and enthusiasms of students 4
 - Confidence 2

12. What do you feel are the most successful elements of Pathway Planning?
- Contact with trusted non teacher 5
 - Direction 2
 - Competent PPO/ Credibility of an outsider 2
 - Delivery of Learning Sequences through grade teams 2
 - Increased engagement of students/industry speakers/ industry visits 2
13. What factors impact on the successful delivery of Pathway Planning in your school?
- Skill of PPO 4
 - External restraints 2
 - Opportunity for staff PD 2
 - Staff willingness 3
 - Time 2
14. What impact has Pathway Planning had in your school?
- Small so far 2
 - Moderate 1
 - Direction for students. Realistic goals and strategies 2
 - Positive enriched experience 4
 - Very positive 3
15. How satisfied are you with the way the PPO works in your school?
- Very well: 10 Moderately well: 2 Ok Not very well Poorly

ABOUT YOU

16. If you could improve one element of Pathway Planning what would it be?
- Greater flexibility for PPO 1
 - More time for PPO to work in the school with staff 5
 - Greater ownership of Learning Sequences 1
 - Locate it more constructively 2
 - Improve communication updates 1

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Thank you. Your contributions to this evaluation process are much appreciated.

Please save this document and email it to: joyce.johnston@utas.edu.au