

DAREBIN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes

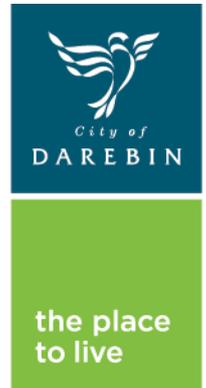
Monday 21 July 2014

4.00pm-5.45pm

Darebin City Council

Function Room, First Floor

350 High Street Preston VIC 3072



Chairs: Cr Gaetano Greco and Cr Vince Fontana

Minute Taker: Jackie Mansourian

Apologies: Kate Morris, Northcote High; Ekrem Ozyurek, East Preston Islamic; Allan Waterson, William Ruthven Primary; Leon Leonidas, Preston South Primary; Debbie Showers, Thornbury Primary; Raffaella Galati-Brown, Northern College of Arts and Technology; Sally Jones, Manager, Darebin Libraries; Cr Angela Villella

Present: Gaetano Greco, Mayor; Cr Vince Fontana; Catherine Hall, Our Children, Our Schools; Nicholas Abbey, VICCSO; Mark Kent, Distance Education Victoria; Bronwyn Stubbs, Distance Education Victoria and Chair of the Darebin Principals' Network; Bev Fegan, new Principal, Croxton School; Meri Ivanovska, Community Transition Support, Inner Northern LLEN; Andrew Horgan, Inner Northern LLEN; Guy Neaves and Alison Burns, Koorie Education Program, Thornbury High School; Anh Mai, High School For Preston; David Kilmartin, Senior Advisor, DEECD; Stuart McFarlane, Aboriginal Affairs Officer, DCC; Donna Karmis, Acting Manager, Children and Family Services, DCC; Wendy Dinning, Coordinator, Business and Development Unit; Dalal Smiley, Manager Community Planning and Customer Service, DCC.

1. Welcome Cr Fontana and then the Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes had been electronically distributed to the DEC members previously. They were not available at the meeting however the Council Officer, Jackie Mansourian distributed and spoke to the report of follow-up actions arising from the previous DEC meeting, May 19, 2014.

See attached Report Appendix 1.

3. Presentation and discussion : Koorie Education Program - Thornbury High School, Alison Burns, Program Coordinator

The video prepared as part of the school's crowd-funding initiative was shown. Alison then distributed her report (see attached, Appendix 2).

Alison's presentation and report ended with the following:

'The first priority of the school is to maintain the role of the Koorie Engagement Officer. The imminent risk of student drop out is a reality.

Secondly we need to reinstate the tutors to provide academic support.

Thirdly we need to raise the issue in a political forum to ensure financial sustainability to support Indigenous students at all levels of schooling, in an ongoing manner.

Thornbury High is asking for both financial support as well as advocacy for Indigenous students throughout all of their schooling.

We recognise that "there are major educational risk factors in Darebin (City of Darebin Education Inquiry Report, April 2014 pg 14). Government secondary schools in Darebin are considered to be more disadvantaged than other government secondary schools in surrounding local government areas (LGA's). From this we are seeking Local Council support for a partnership agreement that links with the Conclusions and Recommendations 2 & 3, pg 16; "supporting schools, students and families from equity groups breaks the cycle of disadvantage and benefits the whole of the municipality." '

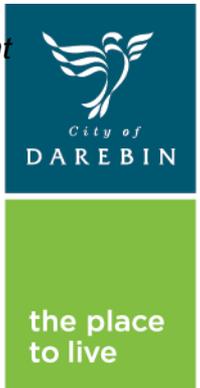
What can Council do and initiate in supporting Koorie students at Thornbury High both in the short term and for the sustainability of the program?

See attached Report: Appendix 2.

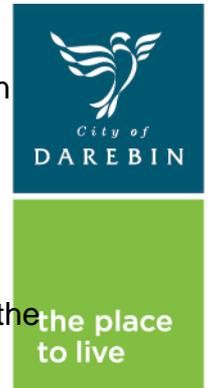
Discussion: Various questions and comments were raised and discussed.

Key points:

- Response by Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc (VAEAI) has acknowledged the impact of funding changes on Thornbury's program and had already issued a media release 'Koorie education in Victoria expected to suffer under Commonwealth Budget.'
- The school has done effective advocacy, both via local political and State and federal government representatives and media.
- The school needs a minimum of \$50,000 to keep the tutorial and outreach program going. If the school decides to keep going with both these programs, it effectively means that something else will have to drop. They have received some funds from For a Just Community Foundation (\$20,000) and the crowdfunding campaign (as of July 28/7 \$ 9,600). The school already employs the Program Coordinator .4 from its own internal funds.
- Minister Dixon's letter to the Leader regarding the extra \$1.1 million + to Thornbury High is disappointing and confusing and Principal will be responding.
- School was encouraged to join Our Communities, Our Children coalition.
- The School's Community Action Team (initially established via INLLEN in partnership with the school) can have leverage.
- VICCSO made a commitment to support TNH's campaign.



- Other schools have also been affected by cuts in funding to Aboriginal education and it is important that Council also consider other schools in any advocacy that is taken up.



Conclusion and Action:

Council Officers to further investigate Council’s advocacy role in response to the presentation by Thornbury High for support and advocacy of the Koorie Education Program at the school and in the context of cuts affecting all Aboriginal students in all Darebin schools.

4. Presentation and discussion : Overview of Current education priorities; David Kilmartin, Senior Advisor, DEECD Darebin

Key points:

- There is great practice across schools in Darebin. Two of these examples are:
- William Ruthven SC Inquiry presentation at Queens Hall, Parliament House opened by the Minister Martin Dixon, and in response James Merlino, Shadow Minister made a commitment to a funding proposal, after State elections.
- Science: Primary Connections linking science with literacy - a 2 year project with Reservoir, Reservoir West and William Ruthven Primary Schools
- Darebin schools have in the main continued key elements of the Achievement Improvement Zone (AIZ) school improvement process from the old Northern Metro region which incorporates key elements of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. Darebin schools in particular were at the forefront of this initiative from its inception.
- Our region is North Western Victoria Region (NWVR) from Richmond to Mildura with Regional Offices in Coburg, Bendigo and Mildura.
- There is a new school review process done annually.

Peer reviews – two principals and one independent reviewer covers 90% of Darebin schools

Priority reviews: These occur where there is a recognition of the need for intervention in school processes and covers 10% of Darebin schools.

- Coburg High School
Will commence a Year 7 cohort next year with 170 students (approx.) a large number of these are from schools in Darebin West: in particular Reservoir West, Preston West, and Bell primary schools.
- Victoria’s Vulnerable Children Strategy 2013 – 2022
DEECD’s plan to implement this strategy has been signed off by key Ministers.

Discussion:

Recognition of the importance of the role and contribution of the DEECD representative in the Darebin Education Committee. (See discussion re-Terms of Reference for DEC, Item 7).

Country Education Project may provide useful learning for collaboration and learning models (blended learning) for suburban schools given expansive nature of regions.

There is currently a review of Baltara School which has provides educational programs for children and young people who are DHS custodial clients and referred mainstream school students (one of the school's campuses is in Preston),

Conclusion and Action:

Invite and coordinate presentations of Victoria's Vulnerable Children Strategy 2013 – 2022 and Review of Baltara to next DEC meeting.

5. Presentation and discussion : High School for Preston (HSP) – Anh Mai

See Attached Report: Appendix 3.

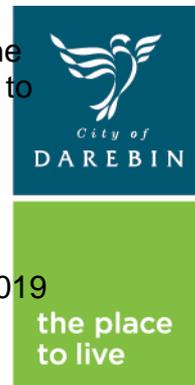
Anh's presentation included the reasons and need for a high school in Preston:

- Need for a secondary school driven by demographic change:
- High population of children and growing as more young couples and families move to Preston
- Planned residential developments to create a step-change in population growth
- "Plan Melbourne" marks Preston as a future population hub
- Council plans for Preston include high proportion of medium and high density residential development
- HSP expects that within a few years, the surrounding schools will reach capacity.
- Without a local high school, some families will move away to access secondary education
- The suburb's life cycle will be reversed and its future sustainability hurt

Discussion

Plan Melbourne has a tool that identifies Preston as one of the most populous suburbs. This example highlights the importance of Planning area of Council to be integrated and consider educational needs as part of housing/neighbourhood planning.

DEECD will not be selling land – holding on for future educational purposes. In the interim, Council is negotiating with DEECD for leasing arrangements and access to space for local community groups and for Intercultural Centre activities.



There may be a timing discrepancy between High School for Preston's identified need for new high school in area and plans by the DEECD. HSP has identified 2019 as the crucial year.

Anh asked whether representation by the High School for Preston group could continue in DEC (See discussion under Terms of Reference Item 7).

6. Overview of Federal and State Budget (2014 – 2015)

Changes to Education

There was insufficient time for this presentation in the meeting. However, a report has been prepared by the Community Renewal Officer and is attached. See Appendix 4.

The Inaugural Jean Blackburn Oration(May 21, 2014) by David Gonski to the Australian College of Educators was a useful resource.

7. Terms of Reference(ToR) of the Darebin Education Committee

The ToR including the objectives and membership were represented which included changes made from previous meeting. The ToR were endorsed by Council in June.

Discussion:

It was noted that the ToR did not specifically include membership of a representative representation from DEECD. This will need to be included.

It was noted that the ToR only included the membership of two community representatives and currently they are VICCSO and High School for Coburg/Our Children/Our Schools representatives.

There were only a few principals present at the meeting. There are high demands and their focus is their schools and their main forum for collaboration occurs through the Darebin Principal's Network.

The ToR has defined school representation as a priority with membership of up to 12 schools – but it does not have to be principals, it can be others, including School Council.

It may be more appropriate to have DEC meetings with a focus on themes or issues that schools/principals are interested in.

Council needs to consider what the 'value added' contribution is that it can make to what schools are already doing to collaborate and in innovation.

The strength of DEC is that it can bring schools and other community stakeholders interested in education together.

It is important that schools feel they own the themes, the processes, the connections and their relationship with Council.

Mapping of current Council-school collaboration will show the breadth and richness of work that is already taking place.



Conclusion and Action:

In November, when there is a review and change of Council positions (including Mayor) it will be opportune to review the membership of DEC to be able to include all people in the meeting.

8. Public and Community Launch of Darebin Education Report – September 2014

Presentation:

That the launch of the Darebin Education Inquiry Summary report take place in the first half of September and that it provide an opportunity for schools to showcase their work and initiatives on three themes:

- Collaboration between schools
- Equity and inclusive practice
- Transitions – School/Work

For the event to be an interactive process between schools and interested people

Discussion:

- Important that the event be inclusive to all interested in schools and education, including parents and children.
- Celebration of Darebin schools (have food, music)
- Venue: Old Preston Girls' Secondary College site? or Northland?
- Not during school holidays
- Weekend or evening

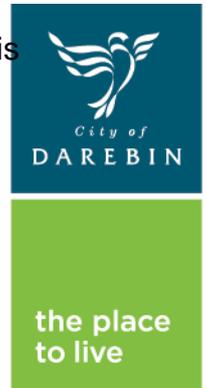
Conclusion and action:

Council Officers to continue planning process and keep the DEC informed of ongoing developments.

9. Other Business

9.1 It is important that DEC meetings integrate into the agenda the recommendations rising from the Inquiry Report.

9.2 The Lakeside Secondary College site is being sold by the DEECD and there is concern about public access along the Merri Creek, including bike paths etc. Council is well aware and involved in the discussion with DEECD.



Future Meetings for 2014

- Monday 1 September, 4pm-5.45pm Darebin City Council Conference Room, 350 High Street Preston.
- Monday 17 November, 4pm -5.45pm, Darebin City Council Conference Room, 350 High Street Preston.