Active Citizenship at Old Yarranlea State School

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Abstract

Considerations of Learning Futures are predicated on recognition of the extreme pace of change in contemporary societies and the need for education systems that prepare learners to participate in such dynamic environments. The precepts of *active citizenship*, which draw upon democratic and humanistic values to emphasise the importance of relationship building and community mindedness, provide both curriculum content for learners and mechanisms for change in school communities.

This paper is an ethnographic evaluation of curriculum and pedagogy that examines the culture and perspectives which support *active citizenship* at Old Yarranlea State School. The paper proposes a metastrategic framework for implementing change, by developing processes that integrate the physical, intellectual, social and emotional components of the school community in a manner that is culturally inclusive, socially sustainable and engaged in the creation and re-creation of democratic principles. The result is an approach to curriculum planning that develops a unique school vision, identity and infrastructure and an approach to pedagogy that is an expansion and application of the curriculum content itself.

Introduction

Australians live in a time of general social and political detachment.

> Australians seemed to reach a point, around the turn of the century, where we sought refuge in a kind of social disengagement. We knew there was a 'big picture' demanding our attention, but we were wearied by too many changes and too many issues: globalisation, Aboriginal reconciliation, the republic, foreign investment, youth unemployment, population policy and then, on top of everything else, the threat posed by international terrorism.
> In response, we have turned the focus inward, and concentrated on things that seemed to be within our control: backyards, home renovations, our children's schools, our next holiday. (Mackay, 2005)

The importance of engaging with society – practising active citizenship – highlights the role of individual schools in the promotion of futures-oriented education (Birzea, 2000; Osler & Starkey, 2003; Starkey, 2002). At Old Yarranlea State School, the community recognised the importance of going beyond curriculum content to ensure that active citizenship takes place in a safe and supportive environment, that citizenship activities contribute to the intellectual quality of the school, that the school community itself operates on principles of active citizenship (interacting, recognising

and valuing difference) and that active citizenship helps connect the school community with the real world.

The climate of societal regression described above prompted the school community to pose this question: "How can curriculum be reformed in such a way that students are prepared for engaged participation in society, and in such a way that the school as an entity can draw from the principles of active citizenship to move into the future as an effective learning organisation?"

Impetus for the Study

In 2004 the Old Yarranlea State School community formulated a set of guiding principles for school operations. This was to provide an educational framework that oriented students towards societal challenges such as the widening gulf between rich and poor, the depletion of the natural environment, a weak sense of community and connectedness and too few active participants in our political processes.

Based on precepts from the four pillars of education (International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century, 1996), the *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (Covey, 1997), the *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century - Preamble and Goals* (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 1999), material from Productive Pedagogies (Queensland Department of Education, 2001), content from the Queensland Syllabus in Studies of Society and Environment (Queensland School Curriculum Council, 2000) and the attributes of the lifelong learner (Queensland School Curriculum Council, 2000), one of the guiding principles determined by the school is particularly relevant to nurturing a futures perspective in students. This principle is:

> Because our children need to develop relationships we value the human trait of self-awareness. We support our children as they develop socially and learn to communicate effectively and participate in an interdependent world. We teach them about culture and identity, employing teaching strategies emphasising recognition and valuing of difference. In this way, our children "learn to live together". (Old Yarranlea State School, 2004)

Following this, it became relevant to examine current practice as a prelude to developing a sustainable process for curriculum renewal.

Approach

An ethnographic approach was adopted for the study since adopting descriptive data collection as the basis for interpretation was most appropriate to the nature and scale of the project (Burns, 2000). Observational data and document analyses were the main systems employed to generate a situational analysis and to develop a perspective of current school culture and curriculum practice (Wiersma, 2000, p. 241). A review of literature on the subject of organisational renewal led to the development of an organisational model for curriculum and holistic school renewal.

The study was conducted as a short-term exercise (over a period of six months) within the context of continuous school operations by the school's teaching principal, supported by members of the school community. Testing of the hypothesis was not

within the scope of this exercise, though it could feasibly be incorporated into any school-based review or renewal cycles.

Definition of terms

Curriculum

Questions of form, function and value of curriculum have been debated frequently in the last several decades – for example, Tyler (1949), Saylor and Alexander (1966), Pratt (1980) and Choate, Enright, Miller, Poteet and Rakes (1995). For the purposes of this paper, *curriculum* will be considered to be "…all the planned learning opportunities offered to learners by the educational institution and the experiences learners encounter when the curriculum is implemented" (Print, 1993, p. 9).

Aiming to refine understandings of what curriculum meant in a practical sense, in 2003 the Old Yarranlea State School community created a format for a school-based curriculum document. Drawing on academic sources – those listed above as well as Taba (1962) and Wiles and Bondi (1993) – and on Departmental sources – the *Years 1-10 Curriculum Framework for Education Queensland Schools* (Education Queensland, 2001) and the whole school literacy planning guidelines (Education Queensland, 2002b, pp. 21-22) – Old Yarranlea State School defined its curriculum as the form, function and value of 10 components (which became distinct sections within the Curriculum Plan document):

- Community profile
- Shared vision
- Core learnings
- Standards and targets
- Pedagogies
- Assessment and monitoring
- Reporting
- Intervention and special needs support
- Leadership, coordination and professional learning
- Strategic community planning.

Active citizenship

Returning to the inspiration for the original guiding principle statement above (Covey, 1997; International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century, 1996; Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 1999; Queensland Department of Education, 2001; Queensland School Curriculum Council, 2000), *citizenship* can be defined as the understanding of the rights, roles and responsibilities of individuals to locale, state, country and the world. *Active citizenship*, then, is applying skills and processes to the knowledge of what citizenship is by overlaying personal and group values and commitments and developing ideas that can turn into actions (with observable effects, outcomes or results).

Specific indicators of active citizenship have been drawn from the Education Queensland New Basics curriculum materials (Education Queensland, n.d.). For the purposes of this evaluation, active citizenship is evidenced by any aspect of curriculum that provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate the following

skills and processes (S/P – indicator numbers have been specified for referential purposes):

<div align="center">Figure 1: Curriculum indicators of active citizenship</div>

S/P 1	interacting within local and global communities
S/P 2	operating within shifting cultural identities
S/P 3	participating in available democratic practices and institutions within that society
S/P 4	explaining the role of media in creating cultural perceptions and influencing crosscultural change
S/P 5	comparing some practices of other cultures with personal cultures
S/P 6	engaging in the creation and re-creation of democratic society
S/P 7	describing cultural activities of their family that identify group members
S/P 8	recognising some ways in which individuals express their identities in various groups
S/P 9	describing responses to attitudes related to particular groups over time

Review of Literature on Organisational Renewal

In terms of futures education, the content of curriculum discussed here is vital. The focus on active citizenship is intended to prepare learners to operate within a society changing more quickly than ever before. Curriculum programs need to aim to provide learners with skills and processes by which they can effectively navigate changes to their physical environment and living spaces, transforming communities, switches in government and other societal institutions (Starkey, 2002), alteration of populations through migration (Osler & Starkey, 2003), the reorganisation of corporations and how they themselves will eventually approach the world of work (Gouthro, 2002). The culture of the school, therefore, must become sufficiently robust in order that the process of renewal itself may operate effectively within this societal change, and it must create a curriculum that is similarly suited.

As Hargreaves (1994. p. 45) noted: "The antidote to the malaise of modernity, with its individualised and balkanised work cultures in teaching and elsewhere, is often seen to be that of building cultures of collaboration within the workplace". Collaboration should be core to any renewal process. "…in a communal school the educational focus for students and teachers seems clearer to those who experience it, and the increased opportunity for sustained contact in groups may heighten the commitment of both teachers and students to succeed" (Lee & Smith, 1994, p. 2). Moreover, the collaboration should be sufficiently extensive to include students, parents, staff and other stakeholder groups. As Brown (2000, p. 120) points out: "If citizenship education is to make an impact on the whole school it will be essential to extend this process to include as wide a representation as possible".

Sensitivity within that ethos of collaboration will be important. "Organisations, like families, are human systems in which a whole range of personal, social, psychological and political dramas are played out" (Whitaker, 1997, p. 69). It should be accepted that the human beings within the organisation are conscious of their own behaviour and therefore that their thoughts, feelings and perceptions are vital to continuing

operations (Burns, 2000, p. 388). This implies an emphasis on holism, operation within the setting, perceptions of participants, assumptions and conclusions subject to change over time and a belief that models of inquiry are loosely constructed and flexible (Wiersma, 2000, pp. 198-199).

These perspectives are brought together by Limerick, Cunnington and Crowther (2002, p. 153) as metastrategic management – an applied approach to leading action research (Burns, 2000, p. 145; Wiersma, 2000, p. 11) that attends to the organisation holistically as a resource that is composed of various inputs and that is responsive to the needs of personnel within it. Metastrategy requires a reconception of the nature of school and curriculum and the roles of those within that community.

It is suggested here that a metastrategic model of organisational renewal will be the most successful in moving forward from current practice to create a robust school culture that can effectively deliver a sustainable active citizenship curriculum. This proposition is examined more closely below.

The School

Situated within the Mt Gravatt campus of Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia, Old Yarranlea State School looks like a small school that might be found in regional or rural Queensland. The school has a capped enrolment of 18 students in Years 1-7 in one multi-age class. Students academically present at a high level on statewide census tests and there is no history of extreme behaviour management measures (e.g., suspensions/exclusions). Most of the school population live locally and about half of the students have parental links to Griffith University. As a government school, the only restriction on enrolment is the cap of 18 – determined by the physical size of the school building. The community are generally active, informed and articulate in their wishes for and expectations of how the school can serve the educational needs of their children. They expect high levels of communication and commitment from staff. Occasionally local community members and institutions are involved in the school when curriculum content warrants such involvement.

Although it is touted as a 'one-teacher school', a number of teachers service the class at different times, and one full-time teacher aide provides continual support. Teachers use a range of styles to suit content and classroom environment. The school district provides teacher support in the form of advisory staff. School staff professional development programs are negotiated to balance personal desires, local needs and systemic requirements.

The most obvious external resource for the school is the Mount Gravatt campus of Griffith University. The school accesses material resources (such as the library, theatre space and swimming pool) and human resources (such as pre-service teachers, researchers and facilities personnel).

Results and Discussion

Collected data on the school curriculum

Data were collected on the written school curriculum through document analyses of the two central curriculum planning records: the overall School Curriculum Plan; and

the more specific unit/weekly teaching plans. In the process of analysing the documents, each was examined for evidence that it directly provides opportunities for students to demonstrate the indicators of active citizenship listed above in Figure 1.

The school curriculum plan is divided into sections serving various descriptive roles: community profile; shared vision; core learnings; standards and targets; pedagogies; assessment and monitoring; reporting; intervention and special needs support; leadership, coordination and professional learning; and strategic community planning. While no indicators were observed in the community profile section, S/P 1 and 8 were identified in the shared vision, all were identified in the core learnings, S/P 8 was evident in standards and targets and all except S/P 4 and 9 were noted in pedagogies. No indicators were evident in the sections on assessment and monitoring, reporting, intervention and special needs support, leadership, coordination and professional learning and strategic community planning.

Classroom weekly plans double as unit plans in this setting. There are four weeks in each unit and each week changes depending on where it lies within that unit. These changes include attention to different thinking skills and key processes each week, a different guiding principle each week and different teaching strategies employed to match these. Activities, planned tasks and selected strategies showed support for all indicators except S/P 4.

Not surprisingly, the bulk of evidence for participatory active citizenship opportunities lies in the curriculum planning that directly affects the students (i.e., classroom activities and teaching practices). While this suggests that active citizenship is taught as a participatory exercise, it also suggests that it is most strongly represented by content rather than process. There is no evidence that active citizenship was the paradigm through which the curriculum was developed.

Collected data on pedagogy

In order to reflect on personal teaching the *Productive Pedagogies Classroom Reflection Manual* (Education Queensland, 2002a) was used. This manual outlines 'best teaching practice' as defined by the *Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study* (Queensland Department of Education, 2001) – a description of 'good teaching' used throughout Education Queensland schools.

Reflections were concentrated on the dimension of *Recognition of Difference* as that applies most strongly to the area of active citizenship. There are five pedagogies listed under this dimension and they are listed here with annotations regarding observations and the active citizenship indicators (see Figure 1).

Cultural knowledges: Indicators observed — S/P 2, S/P 5, S/P 7

The teaching strategies chosen tended to encompass the cultural groups present within the class. It is interesting to note that the class cultural groups are not distinguished by ethnicity or race and barely by economic status. Curriculum content is often chosen to counter this but, while there is a stronger valuing in curriculum knowledge by acknowledgment and recognition of multiple cultural claims to knowledge, this is still presented within the framework of the class dominant culture.

Inclusivity: Indicators observed — S/P 1, S/P 2, S/P 8

Again the problem of identifying "non-dominant groups" within this school surfaces. Even the gender divisions are close to balanced. Activities within the classroom recognise the various learning needs of students but this is in response to differentiated input modes and learning styles rather than a direct acknowledgment of diverse backgrounds.

Narrative: Indicators observed — S/P 1, S/P 7, S/P 9

Narrative has been identified as personally significant. Lesson processes and content are primarily narrative in nature (but exposition is used on occasion or as a minor deviation from the main portion of lessons and activities). Strategies are, whenever possible, designed to tap into the personal experiences of students and students are frequently presented with choices regarding their learning paths (allowing them to develop a 'learning journey' that is personal and more narrative in nature).

Group identity: Indicators observed — S/P 2, S/P 7, S/P 8

The class has been divided into three groups of students: Mentors (those students best at working independently); Explorers (those students developing independent work habits); and Investigators (those students commencing independent work habits). These three groups work apart from one another in some activities on particular 'streamed' tasks (as the Mentors are generally older than the Explorers and the Explorers older than the Investigators). The class also works in six groups of students, each group containing one Mentor, one Explorer and one Investigator. Within these tasks each student has a designated role (defined by the students at the start of the year) and understands personal responsibility as well as contributions that other students can make. There is, as a result, a strong sense of community within the classroom, positive recognition of group identities and a supportive environment for the production of difference and group identities.

Citizenship: Indicators observed — S/P 3, S/P 6, S/P 9

Referring to the classroom weekly plans, there are activities that directly address the idea of active citizenship (most notably a weekly student forum). The classroom discipline policy also runs on overtly stated rules and responsibilities (respect for self, others and property).

Data Interpretation

There appears to be an even spread of the indicators in the curriculum documents in which they are evident. Notably, S/P 7 (describing the cultural activities of their family that identify group members) is driven more by content than by process and so is not in evidence at all in the weekly plans. It is, however, embedded in the School Curriculum Plan section on core learnings.

Furthermore, S/P 4 (explaining the role of media in creating cultural perceptions and influencing crosscultural change) is the least evident and may need attention. Resources and training to support this will be required if that is the case. It may be that further attention to critical literacy and multiliteracies will also move curriculum planning towards a more thorough approach to this indicator.

As for pedagogy, a comfortable spread of indicators is evident, more strongly weighted in favour of the actual practice of democratic process (S/P 3 and S/P 6) than in working with cultural identity. That the class does not contain a great deal of obvious cultural diversity is actually more of a reason to address cultural difference for these children. It is also an opportunity to 'dig' more deeply and discover cultural differences that might not be immediately obvious.

To move towards implementing a sustainable, integrated curriculum of active citizenship, it will be essential for teachers to become skilled in all aspects of the broad definition of active citizenship adopted here. The whole school community must become involved in the practice of active citizenship in order to engage students in learning *about* active citizenship as well as learning *through* active citizenship. The study of politics and government encompasses only a part of that, and genuine programs of active citizenship need to move beyond conventional attempts simply to develop political awareness (Krinks, 1999).

A Futures Perspective

Options and opportunities

> Leadership, from whatever quarter it may come, is obviously important in inspiring us and enlarging our vision. But if the present era – all around the Western world – teaches us anything, it is that we had better not wait for leadership to inspire us. Those of us who dream of a better world re-engage; we must each enlarge our own vision, set our own course and give our own meanings to our own lives. The alternative is acquiescence. Rather than waiting for someone to inspire us, perhaps it is time to begin inspiring those around us.
> (Mackay, 2005)

Action will involve implementing whole school change to improve the depth and quality of active citizenship in the curriculum.

Developing a whole school framework for renewal

Though any process of categorisation can be considered arbitrary, it is convenient to describe the organisation of the school according to four sets of components. The categorisation suggested here includes four types of components: physical; intellectual; social; and emotional.

The material resources of the school make up the physical components that provide and define the learning space and all the objects within it. These are things such as facilities, assets, teaching tools, information and communication technologies and income.

The combined intellectual processes of the students, their parents (and other community stakeholders) and staff make up the intellectual components that are built over time through the school curriculum, training and professional development, and through formal and informal interactions and exchanges. All the creativity that powers a vision and empowers the participants comes from the intellectual components of a school.

Interactions within the school community, as well as interactions with the Griffith University community and with local network groups, make up the social components of the school that highlight the existence and nature of various stakeholder groups, defining what binds and what differentiates them. Social components of the school engage the dissonances to build meaningful interactions among individuals.

The feelings that members of the school community take away from the environment following interactions within that environment make up the emotional components of the school. The emotional components are the collective conscience that drives contribution, development, improvement and renewal.

Inspired by Covey (1997) in his description of the four dimensions of individual renewal, this particular arrangement of components is useful in that it can be applied from a single person up to a stakeholder group and ultimately to an entire organisation. This means that the systems of interaction can be applied to organisational components of varying scales and remain comprehensible.

The systems of interaction need to be structured in such a way that they continually gather data and feedback and that they provide opportunities to reflect upon and act upon following discoveries. What is needed is a form of applied research carried out by the people of the organisation itself as a form of localised problem solving – essentially action research (Wiersma, 2000). Action research provides a sound basis because it is often modelled as cyclical and involves stages of reconnaissance, general planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation that lead to diagnosis, amended planning, further implementation and so on (Burns, 2000).

Metastrategy (Limerick, Cunnington & Crowther, 2002) applied as a method of action research can make cohesive meaning of the four types of components of the school. Collins and Porras (1996) express the process as identifying core values to describe a core purpose, which will lead to an envisioned future. It is important to see the stages as sequential, beginning with cultivating a vision, which in turn cultivates organisational identity. This, then, cultivates a specific configuration design (infrastructure) and systems of action (pedagogy). These systems of action change the shape and nature of the organisation, the organisation impacts upon its own environment and this in turn engenders discontinuity, which requires a renewal process starting again with the founding vision. And so on.

In terms of Learning Futures, the approach complements two of the educational imperatives identified by UNESCO – inclusivity and sustainability (see Kehrwald, this issue). Metastrategy is inclusive in that it is underpinned by collaborative practices and reliant on loosely coupled networks. Without the democratic attention to equitable access for all participants to the planning and implementation process, the organisational resource cannot move from generating a vision to subsequent stages of building identity, infrastructure and procedures. Metastrategy is sustainable, partly also because of this interdependence among participants but mostly because it is powered by discontinuity, not disrupted by it. As an action research cycle the metastrategic approach is responsive to changes in organisational culture. In addition to that, the metastrategy is designed to engender changes in organisational culture,

thereby establishing sustainable processes for continuous renewal embedded in the culture itself.

Implementing the framework

Figure 2: A framework for integrating a program of active citizenship at Old Yarranlea State School

			Vision	Identity	Infrastructure	Pedagogy	
Support systems for the program are socially sustainable, lifestream compatible, communal and power sensitive and diverse	Physical components	→	There is a clear vision of what active citizenship is and what it can be for the school community	The vision is articulated and obviously embedded in school practices	Financial, physical and human assets are transparently managed in a shared environment	Financial, physical and human assets of the active citizenship program support pedagogical practices	**Active citizenship is practised in a safe and supportive environment**
	Intellectual components	→	The vision is understandable and defensible	The vision and its effects on school operations are communicated	The curriculum for active citizenship matches the needs of students, staff, parents and the educational system	Knowledge technology and metacognition provide the bases for integrative understanding	**Citizenship activities develop measurable intellectual quality**
	Social components	→	All community members have contributed to the vision	All community members share the vision	Roles, responsibilities and relationships are communicated clearly and regularly	The learnings of each stakeholder group support the learnings of all other stakeholder groups	**The school community interacts, recognising and valuing difference**
	Emotional components	→	All community members believe in the vision	The vision describes the purpose, operations and outcomes in terms that are unique and desirable	Reflective opportunities are provided for individuals, professional learning circles and community	Current pedagogical philosophy is analysed, synthesised and evaluated to build new learning about active citizenship	**Active citizenship helps connect the school to the real world**

This framework (see Figure 2), built on metastrategic principles, has been deliberately designed to manage processes (not cash, items, facilities or people) and so is supportive and scaleable to requirement based on need. It should be noted that this model, though linear in appearance, is cyclical in nature.

When a vision is being developed, the physical components of the school must be considered in order to determine what the school actually is to each member of the school community, as well as what the school can be. The cultivated vision must be intellectually understandable and defensible (to internal and external scrutiny).

Socially all members of the school community must have the opportunity to contribute to the vision of the school in order for it to be robust and to have meaning. In a spiritual sense, all community members must ultimately believe in the vision that they create. Above all it will be important to instil a sense of cultural renewal and ownership of process in all participants.

When identity is being developed, this vision must be physically articulated and embedded in school practices. The vision and its effects on school operations must be intellectually communicated within and beyond the school community for it to 'take hold'. This will help build the social requirement for the vision to be shared by all members of the school community, which will make the identity of the school (in terms of purpose, operations and outcomes) both unique and desirable.

When the infrastructure is being developed, the physical components (financial, physical and human assets) will have to be managed in an environment of dispersed leadership and transparency. The intellectual components (the curriculum) will need to be accountable to students, staff, parents, community and (ultimately) the supporting educational system. All social roles, responsibilities and relationships will have to be communicated clearly and regularly and spiritually reflective opportunities will have to be provided for individuals and learning units within the school community (inter- and intra-stakeholder groups), and for the school community as a whole. The infrastructure needs to be communally constructed and communally owned.

When the pedagogical systems of action are being developed, the physical components of the school will need to support the embedded practices, which (in turn) will support the vision. Intellectual knowledge technology and meta-learning will need to provide the basis for integrated and integrative understanding. It will become socially imperative that the learnings of each individual stakeholder group support the learnings of every other stakeholder group (e.g., what the parents learn will support the students' learning, what the students learn will support staff development, etc). Spiritually the pedagogical philosophy of the organisation will need to be known and articulated, understood, applied, analysed in terms of current theory and best practice and eventually evaluated and synthesised to build new pedagogy.

Conclusion

The process of affirming existing practices and improving and adding practices to implement the effective and authentic teaching of active citizenship appears to be predominantly the domain of classroom work. It should be noted, however, that the framework for whole school reform implementation works towards four objectives. These are that:

- active citizenship is practised in a safe and supportive environment
- citizenship activities develop measurable intellectual quality
- the school community interacts, recognising and valuing difference
- active citizenship helps connect the school community to the real world.

The danger in planning for this change comes from restrictive thinking, which fails to take into account the discontinuities inherent in working within contemporary organisations (Limerick, Cunnington & Crowther, 2002, pp. 43, 145). This tends to undermine stability negatively (Glastra, Hake & Schedler, 2004). Rather than merely building on current practice, the planning stages should take into account the instabilities of the future and the strategic renewal process should embrace these periods and harness the opportunities that they present for change.

As Figure 3 demonstrates, it is possible to crossreference the skills and processes embedded in active citizenship curriculum content (see Figure 1) with elements of the curriculum renewal model (see Figure 2).

Figure 3: Curriculum indicators applied to the curriculum renewal model

Curriculum skills and processes	Curriculum renewal model elements
S/P1 interacting within local and global communities	The model requires collaboration within the school community and through its local networks.
S/P2 operating within shifting cultural identities	The earliest stages of the curriculum development process involve the development of vision and the adoption of identity. As a cyclical process, the curriculum can be renewed regularly to match the cultural identities.
S/P3 participating in available democratic practices and institutions within that society	The renewal model engages the physical components of the school in building curriculum vision, identity, infrastructure and pedagogy.
S/P4 explaining the role of media in creating cultural perceptions and influencing crosscultural change	The renewal model engages the intellectual components of the school in building curriculum vision, identity, infrastructure and pedagogy.
S/P5 comparing some practices of other cultures with personal cultures	The renewal model engages the social components of the school in building curriculum vision, identity, infrastructure and pedagogy.
S/P6 engaging in the creation and re-creation of democratic society	The renewal model engages the emotional components of the school in building curriculum vision, identity, infrastructure and pedagogy.
S/P7 describing cultural activities of their family that identify group members	The curriculum renewal process can operate only within support systems that are socially sustainable, lifestream compatible, communal, power sensitive and diverse.
S/P8 recognising some ways in which individuals express their identities in various groups	
S/P9 describing responses to attitudes related to particular groups over time	

The process of renewal must be forward thinking to survive the future and the program itself must engender these same characteristics via content and skills. The material of active citizenship – the curriculum content, pedagogy and embedded thinking processes – will similarly provide students of the school with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help them weather uncertainty and approach, both critically and sensitively, their own periods of what Gould (cited in Elsberry, 1996) called "punctuated equilibrium".

The end result should be that the school moves ahead to support the social development of children as effective communicators and mutually supportive participants in at-school and beyond-school activities. Concepts such as 'culture', 'identity' and 'the recognition and valuing of difference' will contribute to stronger self- and group awareness. The Old Yarranlea State School community will then be defined by its ethos of interdependence.

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