



Australia Quaglia Partnership

Submitted by: Quaglia Institute

June 2023

This report highlights the partnership work between the Quaglia Institute for School Voice & Aspirations and educators across Australia. The Quaglia Institute supports schools in their commitment to amplify student voice and help all students reach their aspirations. The following information is intended to paint a picture of what this type of partnership looks like in practice and how it connects with the goals of various education entities in Australia. Please visit our [website](#) to learn more or contact Sue Bryen, Director of Learning Services in Australia, at bryen@quagliainstitute.org with any questions.

Professional Learning Highlights in Australia 2022

The Quaglia Team was proud to partner with education systems, Communities of Practice (CoP), and individual schools throughout 2022 to advance the power and potential of student voice, offering schools an introduction to the work and opportunities to share their voice implementation journeys. Professional learning sessions were designed to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of the importance of voice and aspirations in schools. Participants were introduced to an operational definition of voice:

Voice is sharing thoughts and ideas in an environment underpinned by trust and respect, offering realistic suggestions for the good of the whole, and accepting responsibility for not only what is said but also what needs to be done.

Professional learning focused on understanding why voice matters, how to support everyone's voice in the learning community, and how to use their own voices to foster an environment underpinned by trust and respect. With this as a foundation, participants learned to cultivate a school culture where voices are listened to, learned from, and acted upon in responsible ways. The collaborative goal is to understand and establish student voice as a way of being and as a foundation for supporting everyone achieving their aspirations.

Participating systems included the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership, Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS), and Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE). In addition to this, thirty-one schools from across Victoria formed Communities of Practice that came together for professional learning with the Quaglia Institute at regular intervals over the course of the school year. Other schools elected to work with the Quaglia Institute on an individual basis, co-designing the implementation of voice practices and processes as part of their school's strategic plans. Recognising that each educational context is unique, each group partnered with team members from the Quaglia Institute to discuss their contextual needs and co-design a tailored learning and implementation process.

Brisbane Catholic serves as a wonderful example of building capacity and sustainability for voice and aspirations. During its third year partnering with the Quaglia Institute, BCE committed to training 12 educators as Student Voice Advocates who became certified to train others within the BCE system. In addition to expanding capacity within systems, the Quaglia Institute hosted its inaugural Student Voice Study Tour to create an opportunity for schools to connect with others who are likewise committed to enhancing the impact of voice. In addition to working directly with schools, the Quaglia Institute presented at the ACEL National Conference and published an article about [Student Voice](#) in AEL magazine.

Our work in Australia throughout 2022 included:

- Online webinars
- Online and on-site consultancy
- On-site School Voice reviews
- Whole school, face-to-face professional learning
- Inaugural Student Voice Study Tour
- Support for implementation through the development of AU-specific resources
- Presentation at National ACEL Conference



In recent years, Australian education policy has included requirements related to student voice, and school leaders are reaching out to the Quaglia Institute as the quality source of student voice expertise. [Student Voice](#) and the [Aspirations Framework](#) are at the core of the Quaglia Institute's work. To learn more about how to embed this work in schools, please visit our website: quagliainstitute.org.

Voice within State and Territory Strategic Plans

In recent years, the recognition at the system level of the importance and impact of student voice has expanded, and states and territories are increasingly seeking student input at the policy level through student advisory committees. One example is the Minister's Student Council, known as DOVES (Department of Student Voices in Education and Schools), established in NSW to meet and advise education ministers. Whilst involving dedicated groups highlights a willingness to include students' ideas and opinions, many state and territory strategic plans also explicitly call for schools to value and amplify all students' voices and engage students in decision making at classroom and school levels. Schools are partnering with the Quaglia Institute to implement the [School Voice Process](#) and the Aspirations Framework because the work directly aligns with and supports implementation of the following National and state/territory priorities:

- Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration: Goal 2 - All young Australians become confident and creative individuals, successful lifelong learners, and active and informed members of the community.
- Child Safe Standards, Standard 2: Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- ACARA General Capabilities: Creative and Critical Thinking, Personal and Social capability, Ethical Understanding, and Intercultural Understanding.
- VIC FISO 2.0 Focus on Learning and Wellbeing, Practice Principle 3: Student voice, agency and leadership, including the use of HITS instructional practices.
- WA Aspiration within the Strategic Directions for Public Schools: For every student to develop the personal and social attributes that form the basis for future wellbeing.
- NSW School Excellence Framework: Students are well supported as increasingly self-motivated learners, confident and creative individuals, with personal resources for future success and wellbeing.
- ACT Future of Education: Placing students at the centre through strengthening inclusion, student agency and wellbeing.
- TAS Department of Education Strategic Plan: Learners are actively participating in learning.

Communities of Practice/Professional Learning Networks

Throughout 2022, we continued our work with groups of schools that created Communities of Practice, also referred to as Student Voice Professional Learning Networks. These schools elected to learn together and share their voices and aspirations journeys with one another. Participants listened to, learned from, and led with one another to more effectively embed the School Voice Process in their schools.

Some networks formed based on geographic location, while others were developed based on their school size. This professional learning was co-designed by the Quaglia Team and leaders of each network to utilise virtual, in-person, or hybrid models spanning a full school year. All content delivered is aligned with the Australian Curriculum and the Aspirations Framework, focusing on amplifying student voice and supporting all students in reaching their aspirations. Year 1 learning is specifically focused on embracing a common definition of voice, understanding the Aspirations Profile, and embracing the School Voice Process as schools introduce this work to all members of the school community, including adults AND students! Professional learning in Years 2 and 3 allows participants to dig deeper into the Guiding Principles of Self-Worth, Engagement, and Purpose, as well as the 8 Conditions within these principles that support voice in becoming a “way of being” in schools. Examples of these Conditions include creating a sense of belonging for all students, developing curiosity and creativity, and developing individual confidence to take action.

Participating schools are encouraged to utilise Quaglia Student Voice surveys as a meaningful source of data to inform the work, though schools are also welcome to utilise other measures of student perspectives on school culture and the learning environment. Using data that reflects students’ voices and partnering with students to analyse that data in order to guide decisions and actions for improvement is always at the heart of Student Voice & Aspirations as schools live out the School Voice Process of listening to, learning from, and leading with students.

We are no longer looking solely for a high impact teaching strategy—we are looking for a high impact teaching strategy with voice embedded. We had focused on learning intentions and success criteria and making them about the process of learning, not just about creating a product. Then we wondered what it would look like if the students could co-construct the success criteria with teachers. What if they were actively involved in the learning process?

When first presented to the whole school, groans were audible and eye rolling was visible. “Oh, no, we can't do this!” was the first reaction. But now it's happening across the school. While the approaches vary, they all get students involved in creative co-construction. The biggest change is that the list of success criteria is no longer wallpaper. Students have actually started to use it for the learning. Previously, teachers would arrive in the morning, write the criteria on the board, and introduce a lesson. But the students did not see the correlation or direct connection to what they were doing. They were divorced from the process.

Now, children are involved and engaged. Rather than seeing wallpaper, children approach the board with their work and check off what they have done. They are able to reflect: “Have I achieved the success for today's lesson?” They readily use the criteria to determine by the end of the lesson if they had achieved success. “Yes, I did all those things and I've learned this!” And when students forget what to do, or finish but aren't sure if they have done it correctly, they check against the challenge success criteria. They take the initiative, and even if they do not yet fully understand, they take an “I'm going to have a go at it!” approach. Co-constructing success criteria helps students engage in learning and gives them the knowledge and confidence to take initiative.

Nicole, PLC leader, Knox Gardens, Victoria

Whole School Professional Learning

The Quaglia Institute enjoys working with schools that are looking to make a difference throughout their school, involving both students and staff with a shared commitment to impacting the good of the whole. The opportunity to partner with individual schools allows for a more nuanced and contextualised approach to the School Voice implementation process.

As part of their strategic planning last year, many schools identified the need to improve student voice and agency and began the process by learning the Quaglia voice definition. Schools were keen to select voice teams to support and drive implementation across their schools. Each school developed clear roadmaps for their journeys, identifying the expected actions and roles of both teachers and students. Regular planning, evaluation, and review of impact guided the next steps for school teams. The teams met regularly with a Quaglia Institute staff member to undertake readiness assessments and plan the process of shared learning about voice and aspirations. Every context is different, and the individualised planning for learning and action steps allowed schools to integrate voice professional learning with their other school-specific focus areas.

The impact of our work with individual schools was evident in many ways:

- Development of shared language across the school.
- Implementation strategies co-designed by teacher leaders.
- Student-led inquiry cycles based on student voice data.
- Whole school collaborative professional learning.
- On-site reviews to assess current practices aligned with student voice.
- Integration of school voice practices within school improvement plans.
- Professional learning at school, PLC and individual levels.
- Consistent practices across the whole school.



Mossiel Park Primary School

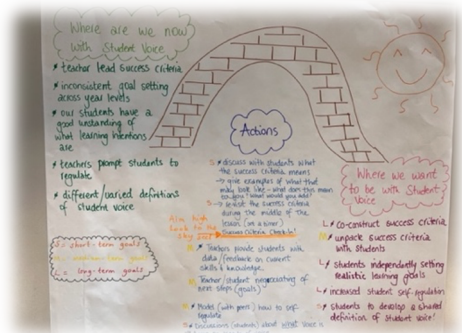
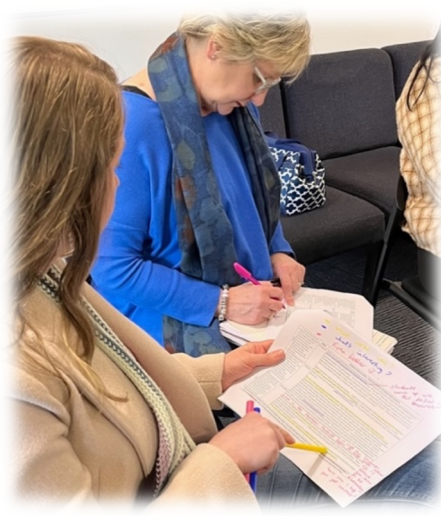
The Quaglia Institute also conducted on-site reviews with individual schools. The purpose of these reviews is to gauge the current status of the implementation of the School Voice Process and the extent to which student voice and aspirations are embedded across the school. It is based on the School Voice Process of listening to, learning from, and leading with students. It also draws on the Aspirations Framework, a research-based set of principles and conditions that, along with contextually relevant decisions made by

each school community, support schools to create a learning environment in which all students and adults are inspired to achieve their very best—personally, socially, professionally and academically.

The report covers four areas of focus:

- Voice & Aspirations
- Self-Worth
- Engagement
- Purpose

Several schools sought feedback through an on-site review. During these visits, there were opportunities to hear from leaders, teachers and students about their current understanding and practices related to student voice. On-site school reviews include a written report identifying current practices that amplify voice and areas that can be developed to increase student voice across the school. These onsite reviews provide a unique lens through which teams of teachers, leaders, and students can celebrate their efforts and identify areas for continued focus and improvement. After undertaking professional learning and selecting deliberate voice amplifier practices, additional on-site reviews are planned for 2023 to measure the impact of their efforts.



Mossgiel Park Primary School

Building System-Wide Capacity

Brisbane Catholic Education partnered with the Quaglia Institute to bolster student wellbeing by increasing student voice opportunities across the diocese. As evidenced by the firsthand account below, the impact of the commitment to the Voice & Aspirations work was transformative. The work in BCE went beyond listening to students’ voices. Students were increasingly involved in decision making processes, resulting in increased engagement and self-esteem. Three years of collaboration with the Quaglia Institute also resulted in a dedicated group of educators earning certification as Student Voice Advocates. Achievements from this group include the creation of a [BCE Student Voice website](#), the development of student voice consultants in high school, and student-created mental health resources. BCE is well prepared to ensure that student voice remains a way of being.



[This presentation](#) created by a BCE student illustrates the Student Voice process.

I could see how much kids were yearning to be heard. We know they've always had a voice, but when it is at the forefront and they are engaged, students' self-esteem improves. The value is in the climate you create. The epiphany for me was that voice is very much connected to learning and voice needs to be a way of being. It needs to be embedded in structures, processes, and conversations. It is not about doing "voice on the side" or as a stand-alone project at lunchtime. We make sure we are continually and explicitly connecting to it.

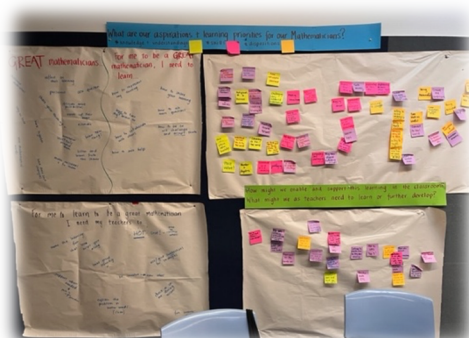
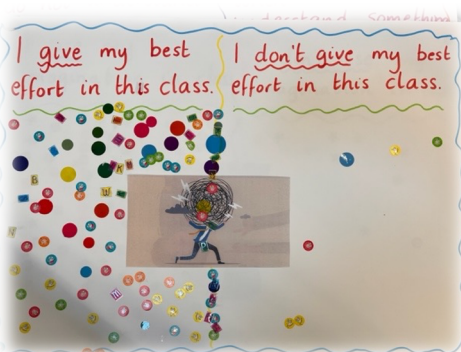
We make sure voice is part of our processes. For example, when we wrote our behaviour plan, we made sure three components were included: be responsible by taking ownership for your thoughts and actions, create a safe environment by sharing your thoughts and ideas, and contribute to the good of the whole in respectful ways. We discussed each aspect with students and worked together to create the behaviour plan.

This collaborative approach will not be restricted to our annual plan. It will be applied throughout our systems and structures, supporting where we need to get to and informing our next steps. Everything is about impact, and we must get the processes right.

Danielle Carter, Principal, Guardian Angels, Queensland

Student Voice Study Tour

Our inaugural Student Voice Study Tour provided a great opportunity to see voice in action across an entire school. Winchelsea Primary School generously agreed to host interested educators for an entire day. Attendees came from Victoria and Queensland to ask questions and hear from students, teachers, and leaders about the impact of the voice learning that has taken place over the last three years. Participants had opportunities to visit classrooms, talk with students, and see evidence of voice practices. Students were proud of their voices, eagerly explaining why it is important to use your voice, take action, and listen to and learn from others. Clear expectations of student and teacher actions were evident in classrooms.



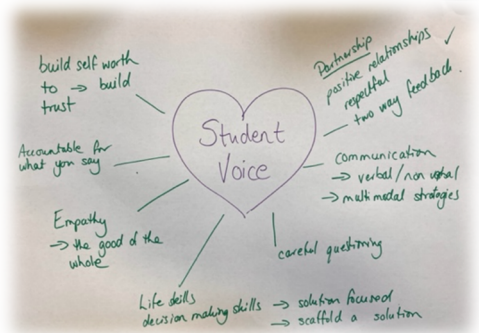
Winchelsea Primary School

Throughout the day, the story of the voice implementation journey was revealed, and artifacts and documents of the learning process were shared and explained by school leaders, highlighting the deliberate approach to ensure that voice was becoming a way of being. Rather than being viewed as a series of isolated activities, it was evident that the school community integrated the concept of voice across all aspects of the school. Several teachers shared their personal reflections on the learning journey, including their own learning, teaching strategies and commitment to incorporating student voice into their daily practices.



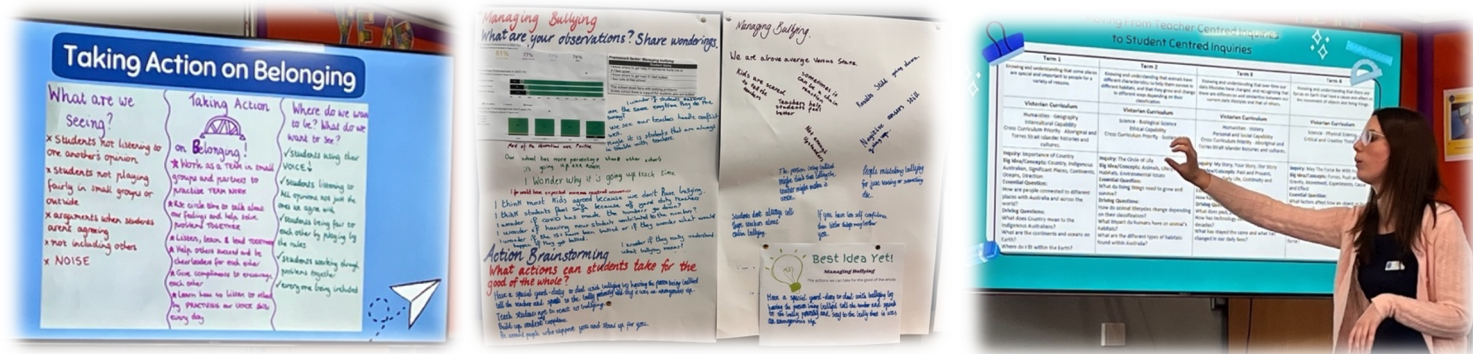
Introductory Voice & Aspirations Professional Learning

In addition to professional learning delivered to partner schools and networks, the Quaglia Institute also co-hosts single-day professional learning events about the Power and Potential of Student Voice. Schools interested in learning more about and experiencing firsthand our Voice & Aspirations work are invited to bring teams to these sessions, each of which is hosted by a school already partnering with the Quaglia Institute and deeply engaged in the Student Voice & Aspirations work. Host schools enthusiastically share their voice journeys and paint a picture of what it looks like for student voice to become a “way of being” across a school system. Students are always involved, continually impressing participants and demonstrating what it looks like in practice to have student voice truly lead the way in every aspect of a school community.



Kangaroo Flat Primary School

These introductory professional learning sessions offer the opportunity to engage directly with educators and students currently participating in this work. In addition, the Quaglia Institute provides ready-to-use resources, reflections and connections related to the unique context of each school, along with suggestions for next steps and continued support for any schools interested in learning more and engaging in future partnerships.



Knox Gardens Primary School

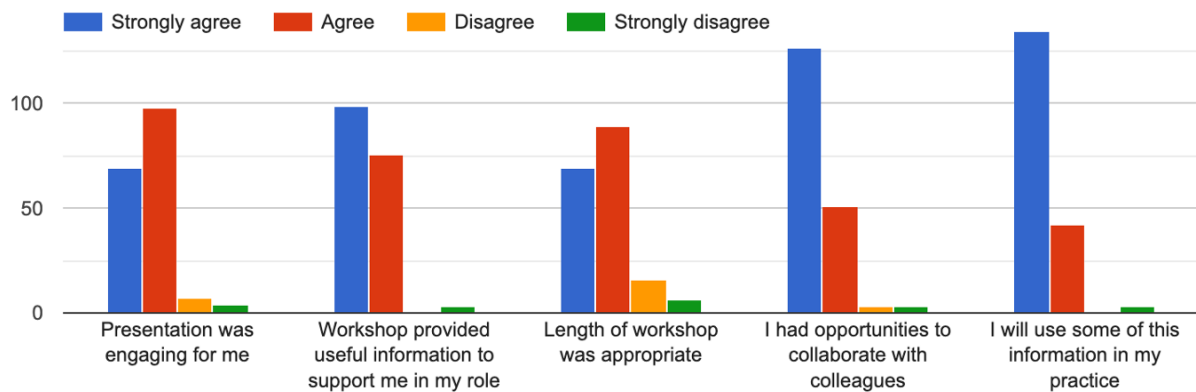
Participants' Reflections

Educators' feedback from professional learning for educators provides valuable insights for the Quaglia Team regarding what is effective and what is needed to further support educators. Some of the feedback we received in 2022 includes:

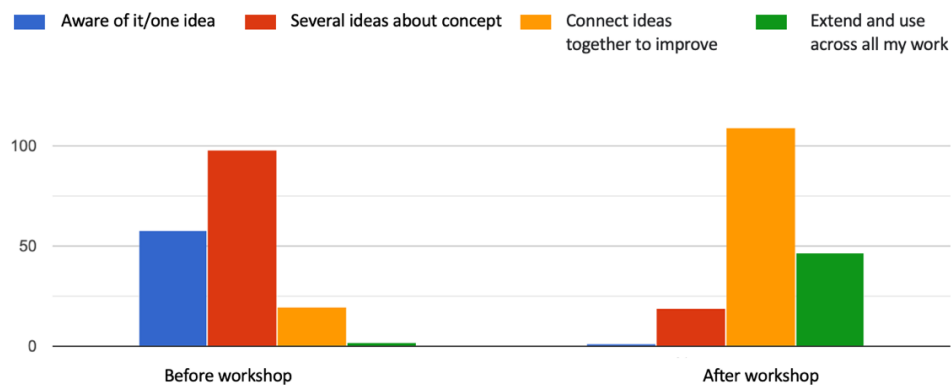
What are the key messages will you take from this workshop?

- Accept students and their individual aspirations as they are, not what I think they should be.
- Co-create solutions to problems.
- The power of voice changes mindsets and benefits all learners.
- Embed student voice in everything and the importance of listening to all students' voices.
- So many. A couple I wrote down are: You are a hero whether you know it or not, and self-worth is the juice that keeps everything moving forward.
- Students' voices need to be given different avenues to be heard and implemented. Student voice isn't what I want to hear, it's what they have got to say.
- We need to explicitly teach the skills for student voice.
- Purpose isn't just professional; it is also how you want to be as a person/community member.
- Just to remember to individualise each student and celebrate tiny achievements.
- Shift of understanding from choice to authentic voice.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?



Rate your level of understanding



The following statements reflect students' understanding of their own voices and the impact they can have:

- Student voice is teachers listening to students' ideas and their thoughts of ways to improve school.
- Student voice means everyone gets a fair share of helpful things to say.
- I have learnt a lot about other students, and I have learnt how to be a good leader.
- It feels really nice. Normally you think adults do all the things and you can't do much, but with student voice you know it is about you, your ideas and opinions.
- I know I can say what I want to say and no one will laugh at me.
- The teachers listen to us more and let us have input into our learning. Everybody is opening up more. Student voice means people keep building on each other's ideas and it's really nice.
- You can actually make a difference.
- Student voice is being able to provide ideas to the teacher so the teachers can take those ideas and students can work together to make something big happen at school.
- We actually teach each other. Everyone has a say and has helped us be more of a cohort as a group.

Quaglia Student Voice Survey

Student Voice & Aspirations work is centered around [8 Conditions](#) that educators can use to live out the [3 Guiding Principles](#)—Self-Worth, Engagement, and Purpose—in their classrooms and schools. Based on more than three decades of research by the Quaglia Institute, these Conditions prepare students and teachers to strive for and fulfill their personal, social, professional, and academic potential. Seeking to have more student-friendly surveys with results that are provided in real time, several schools chose to utilize the [Quaglia Student Voice surveys](#) and incorporated analysis and action steps into the partnership work. The Quaglia Student Voice surveys are designed to measure these 8 Conditions across an entire school.

The 8 Conditions are:



The Student Voice survey is administered to all students in a school and provides school leadership teams with a school-wide view of student voice data in a timely manner. Student Voice survey results are available in real time, custom questions unique to each individual school can be added, and Next Practices specific to each survey statement are available. Data can be analysed by grade level and a variety of other demographic filters.

After each survey administration, School Voice Teams gather to analyse data and prepare for student focus groups that facilitate conversations with students to better understand the meaning behind survey results. Unpacking data with students provides multiple perspectives and a shared understanding of barriers and enablers for school improvement. Equipped with this shared knowledge, staff and students can identify areas to celebrate, as well as actions that can be taken for continued growth. Using student voice data to inform staff of student perspectives and their sense of wellbeing, students and teachers have opportunities to work collaboratively; this contributes to a trusting and respectful environment where teachers and students partner to achieve improved outcomes.

Some schools in Australia have used their Student Voice data to undertake inquiry cycles with students. Working with students to analyse and understand the data helps create a school experience in which all students can thrive. At Mossgiel Park Primary School in Victoria, senior members of the Quaglia Institute worked with staff and students to analyse and interpret their Student Voice data. This provided a valuable opportunity for all involved to see the power and potential of students discussing their own perspectives on the conditions at their school. These insights were then used by staff and students to identify the strengths of the school and possible focus areas for the future. Staff were able to prioritise areas for development and this information was used as part of the School Improvement Plan for 2023. Collaboration with the Quaglia Institute will continue in 2023 as school leadership has highlighted the enthusiasm of staff and students to increase all voices across the school.

To further help schools listen to and learn from the voices of students and employ strategies that support the 8 Conditions, the Next Practices resource is built into the survey site. Next Practices are utilised as a key resource to support areas identified for targeted improvement. The following is a sample of the Next Practices related to the survey statement “I am a valued member of my school community.”

I am a valued member of my school community.

- Read [“The Science of School Belonging”](#) published by Psychology Today.
- Have conversations with students about how school does/does not embrace and nurture their individuality.
- Have staff write brief biographies about themselves. Share these bios with students and discuss what new things they have learned and appreciate about their various teachers.
- This [article](#) from Edutopia includes a five-step exercise on identity and belonging that helps middle school students appreciate differences—in themselves and in their peers.
- Use the [Aspirations Story Squares lesson plan](#) to learn each student’s hopes and dreams and connect those with lesson topics.
- Use the tips provided by [ReachOut](#) to help students build relationships and connections with their peers.

Available for students in Years 3-6 and 7-12, the online Student Voice surveys take about 10 minutes to complete. The Quaglia Institute also has surveys and support resources for schools to foster voice for students in Years K-2. The power of the Student Voice surveys is the collaboration between teachers and students as they interpret and analyse the data together. This lays the foundation for authentic student voice. Students are not simply given a survey, but are valued members of a team listening to and learning from the voices of all students across the school.

Several schools in Australia have started utilizing the Quaglia Student Voice survey to strengthen their understanding of students’ experiences in school. As the student voice work continues to grow in Australia, the survey will become an increasingly important tool for supporting the wellbeing of students.

iKnow My Class Survey

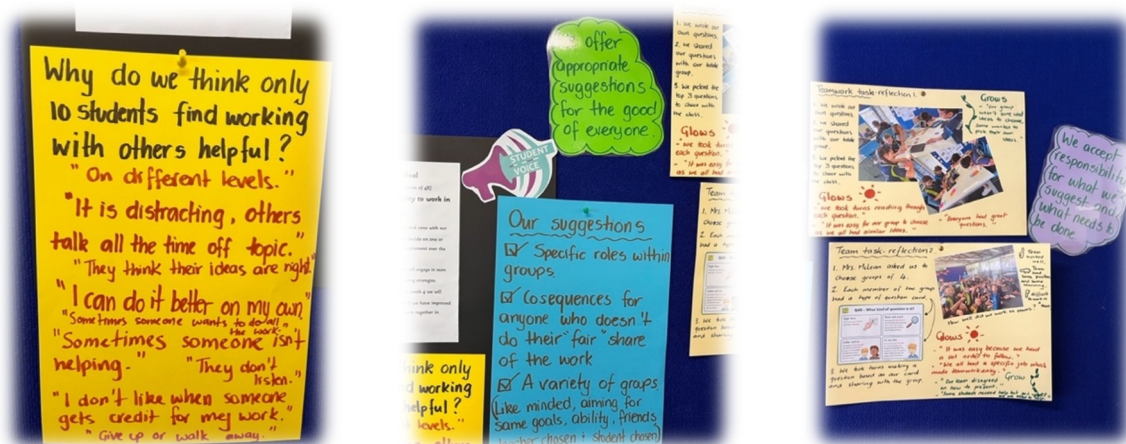
The [iKnow My Class survey](#) helps individual classroom teachers in Years 3-6 and 7-12 discover students’ perspectives of the course and their role in learning and engagement in class. It allows for ongoing, formative assessment of students’ perceptions and engagement and allows teachers to make necessary midcourse adjustments. Teachers have discretion regarding when to administer the survey. They are encouraged to enhance the survey by adding their own questions and involve students in analyzing the data to determine effective midcourse adjustments.

Teachers utilise iKnow My Class surveys to gather class-specific data on student perceptions in three key areas:

- Student Perceptions of Oneself in the Learning Process
- Student Perceptions of the Course Overall
- Student Perceptions of the Teacher and Instruction

To assist with data analysis, the Quaglia Institute provides teachers with strategies for analysing data with students so that the data and future actions are co-owned by the teacher and a class of students in partnership with one another. Survey results are provided in real time, allowing a teacher and students to immediately analyse data to celebrate what is working well and collectively discuss action plans in which students take shared responsibility for improvement. Students’ perspectives inform teachers of ways they can work with students to identify and co-design innovative approaches to improve students’ enjoyment and engagement in the learning process. They also highlight how students perceive the care and effort that teachers put into creating a positive learning environment.

Teachers in Australia are just starting to use the iKnow My Class survey and have already recognised the value in hearing directly from their students about what works best to improve their learning. The following is an example of how the iKnow My Class survey led to thoughtful dialogue between the students and teacher, ultimately leading to a change that immediately impacted learning. All teachers at Guardian Angels gather data from the iKnow My Class survey. In 2022, staff were keen to connect the culture of feedback to the school's 'Glows and Grows' process already in use in classrooms. Staff and students collaborated to identify classroom strengths and areas for development as well as wonderings from the students. Each class set their own goals for each term to work on and provided deliberate time for collective reflection based on their collaborative efforts each term.



Guardian Angels Primary School

As with the school-wide Student Voice survey, Next Practices for the iKnow My Class survey provide specific strategies for teachers to consider. The following is an example of the Next Practices resource related to “The teacher knows my hopes and dreams.”

The teacher knows my hopes and dreams.

- Teach your students about the [Aspirations Profile](#) so you can support them to dream about the future and be inspired to take action in the present.
- A Gallup poll indicates that the best educators cultivate their students' strengths and learn about their hopes and dreams. What steps are you taking to learn about your students' hopes and dreams?
- Help your students explore their hopes, dreams, and goals, and discuss with them the importance of [SMART Goals](#). Provide [templates](#) to guide the goal-setting process. Revisit established goals on a regular basis, have students reflect on them, and set new goals.
- Share your current and future professional goals with your students.
- Explore the hopes and dreams of the current local, state, and national governments. Ask your students if they share these hopes and dreams and discuss why they do or do not.
- Let students interview each other about their hopes and dreams. Have interviewers write about what they learned in a news article format.

Continued Growth

Whilst 2022 saw several schools start implementing the School Voice Process with the Quaglia Institute, the benefit of partnership is the ongoing learning and implementation that comes from long-term commitment and collaboration. We were able to work with schools to improve students' wellbeing and learning outcomes as they made progress in whole school understanding and integration of voice. The

opportunity for schools to collaborate and co-design their learning pathways—from individual, to small group, to system level collaboration—meant the professional learning was accessible to all. The delivery modes included virtual, face-to-face, and hybrid learning.

We continually learn from the schools we work with, and we are always adapting and creating new resources to meet the various needs of schools. Catering for early years, primary, and secondary schools, the opportunity to learn with and from others has encouraged diverse voices to share their journeys. Some of the work that has been celebrated and shared with the Quaglia Institute can be found in our website's Voice in Action section, including [Queenscliff Primary School](#) and [Guardian Angels'](#) celebrations of their voice work in action. The [Guardian Angels case study](#) can also be viewed online for additional details about their student voice journey.

The Quaglia Institute is committed to continuing to foster student voice throughout Australia. Our priorities include:

- Meaningfully connecting professional learning to Australian education policies and goals.
- Expanding the use and interpretation of survey data in partnership with students.
- Extending network participation in regions across AU.
- Seeking to enhance voice and aspirations in rural and remote areas.
- Continuing to present at national conferences.
- Publishing the amazing work done in Australian schools for an international audience.
- Expanding Study Tours to increase awareness of Voice & Aspirations work.
- Increasing the number of secondary schools participating across the country.

You can find more information about how to partner with us to embrace and unleash the power of voice in schools in the [professional development section](#) of our website.

Please feel free to contact Sue Bryen at bryen@quagliainstitute.org at any time with questions or to learn more about our partnership work.

