



Australia Quaglia Partnership

Submitted by:

Quaglia Institute for School Voice & Aspirations

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This report highlights the partnership work between the Quaglia Institute for School Voice & Aspirations (QISVA) and educators across Australia during the 2023 academic year. 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 2023

The Quaglia Institute Team was proud to partner with education systems, Communities of Practice (CoP), and individual schools throughout 2023 to advance the power and potential of student voice. Offering schools an introduction to the work and continuing the implementation of voice-enhancing practices, professional learning sessions provided participants with a comprehensive understanding of the importance of voice. Additionally, teachers were given opportunities to share their voices and aspirations journeys. These sessions emphasised how deliberately expecting students to express and work towards their aspirations can improve student wellbeing and learning outcomes. The School Voice Process of listening to, learning from, and leading with students resulted in a significant impact in many of our partner schools.

The Attitudes to School Survey data shared with QISVA from two schools in Victoria highlighted the significant impact of the Student Voice & Aspirations professional learning. This survey asks students in Years 4-6 about their school climate. Some of the areas related to the QISVA professional learning are shown in the chart below. One school showed improvement in the first four areas in the following chart, while the other school demonstrated improvement in student voice and agency:

Survey Area	2023 Agreement	Growth from 2022
Teacher-student relations	84%	+13%
Social engagement	86%	+24%
Learner characteristics	85%	+12%
School safety	86%	+21%
Student voice and agency	87%	+7%

Professional learning for schools in 2023 focused on understanding why student voice matters, supporting everyone's voice in the learning community, and using your own voice to foster an environment underpinned by trust and respect. With this as a foundation, participants learned to cultivate a school culture where all voices are listened to, learned from, and acted upon responsibly. The collaborative goal was to understand and foster student voice so that students could genuinely partner with teachers and develop their capabilities to reach their own goals and aspirations.

Participating schools included educators from Victoria, NSW and Queensland. Some schools worked with QISVA as individual schools, collaborating to co-design professional learning for staff throughout the year. Networks of schools engaged in work collectively to learn together and share practices. Some groups of schools entered their third year of partnership with QISVA, deepening their knowledge and understanding of the conditions that make a difference to student learning and wellbeing. 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.

In addition to expanding capacity within systems, the Quaglia Institute hosted another Student Voice Study Tour to create an opportunity for schools to connect with others who are likewise committed to enhancing the impact of voice. This year, a Queensland school hosted the Power and Potential of Student Voice day, providing an opportunity for local State and Catholic schools to learn more about the impact of the School Voice Process. In addition to working directly with schools, the Quaglia Institute presented a three-part webinar series through ACEL, presented at the ACEL Inclusion & Disability Conference and the Western Australian Primary Principals' Association (WAPPA) Conference in Perth, WA.



Our work in Australia throughout 2023 included:

- Online webinars
- Online and on-site consultancy
- On-site school voice reviews
- On-site student workshops
- Whole school, face-to-face professional learning
- Student Voice Study Tour
- Implementation support, including AU-specific resources
- Presentations at conferences

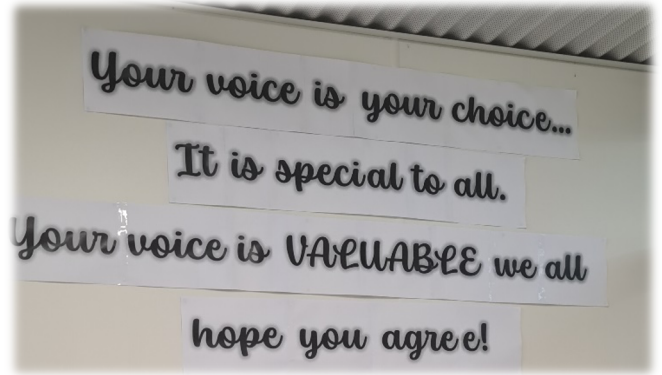
Australian education policy increasingly calls for greater student agency, or voice, in decision-making. The University of Melbourne has recently published its [Assessment Suite of Complex Competencies](#). This transformation from a culture of compliance to a culture of collaboration, including recognising students' individuality and skills beyond academic capabilities, requires deliberate actions by schools to activate and attend to student voice. It is through students' voices that educators can hear about the ideas, needs and actions of *all* students. To reach our collective [goals for all young Australians](#), educators must seek out student perceptions and lead *with students* to collaboratively create a new way of being. As leaders in this area for over 40 years, the Quaglia Institute for School Voice & Aspirations is the quality source of student voice expertise. [Student Voice](#) and the [Aspirations Framework](#) are at the core of the Quaglia Institute's work, helping schools turn ideas into practical solutions so students and teachers are genuine partners in teaching and learning. To learn more about how to embed this work in schools, please visit our [website](#).

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 including student voice as part of their State Strategic Plans. The Quaglia Institute's Voice & Aspirations 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 Department of Education](#): Every student, every classroom, every day: Our aspiration is for every student to unlock and fulfil their learning potential.
- [NSW](#): Strengthen student wellbeing and development.
- [ACT Future of Education](#): Placing students at the centre of their learning and supporting student agency.
- [TAS Department of Education Strategic Plan](#): Connection, Courage, Growth, Respect, and Responsibility.
- [South Australian Strategy for Public Education](#): Areas of impact include learner agency, equity and excellence, effective learners, and wellbeing.

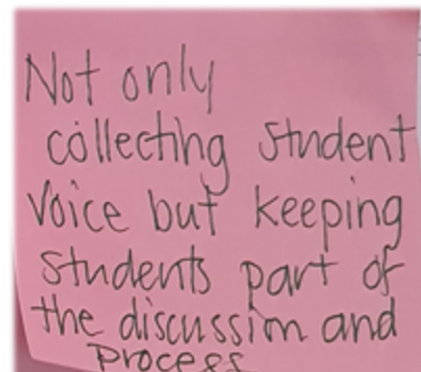
These plans for the inclusion and strengthening of student involvement in decisions will not happen in schools by chance, and it must not be left to individuals to make the necessary changes themselves. It requires a deliberate, continual change in the way we approach education and schooling. Purposeful change requires a whole-school approach that invites students to be part of the solution. Students must be part of the process, working alongside educators to develop a shared responsibility for actions that support student voice and allow students' aspirations to forge their pathways to success.



Communities of Practice/Professional Learning Networks

Throughout 2023, we continued our work with groups of schools that created Communities of Practice, demonstrating a shared commitment to learning how to make voice a way of being in their schools. One group consisted of schools that were in their third year of partnering with the Quaglia Institute. All CoP professional learning content is aligned with the Australian Curriculum and the Aspirations Framework, focusing on amplifying student voice and supporting all students in reaching their aspirations. Students who have aspirations know and understand their current and future goals and are inspired to work towards these goals. They develop capabilities such as critical and creative thinking, collaboration and self-management. They are able to make plans and take deliberate actions to reach their goals, demonstrating ownership of their learning pathway. We want all students to know that they are capable of creating their own goals and selecting effective strategies to reach those goals. When students are included in the whole process of teaching and learning, they become part of the solution, working in partnership with teachers to create continual improvement.

Several schools hosted these live professional learning sessions, sharing their actions in classrooms and across the school. The opportunity to see 'what it looks like in action' in different contexts was valued by all leaders and teachers. Learning from each other, sharing practices that have made a difference to students and having the opportunity to hear from students themselves was powerful. The experience highlighted how there is no single approach to empowering students, but rather a combination of deliberate practices, determination, and decisions made by teachers and students on a day-to-day basis.



A new community of practice brought several schools together through virtual and in-person sessions. One in-person session encouraged schools to examine their own Quaglia Student Voice survey data as they were taken through a Data Dive session. This demonstrated for teachers how to work with students to look beyond the quantitative data and discuss the story behind the numbers. Teachers learned the importance of not making assumptions about data and were eager to apply their learning in their own schools in order to truly understand the student data. Gembrook Primary School took the opportunity to learn from their students in Years 3-6 and unpacked their Quaglia Student Voice data. The teacher leading the work at the Gembrook reflected as follows on the process:

'I ran two sessions with each grade unpacking the voice definition, and then we looked at our lowest data sets from each of your 8 areas. Of all the data, it was clear that there were three main issues that the students really cared about: how we display their work, how we assign leadership roles, and feeling important at school. So, in the second session, I unpacked this further with them and developed our realistic ideas for the good of the whole. They were simply amazing, so respectful and sensible! I am really excited about what we have achieved as a first step.'

These student sessions at Gembrook were incorporated into staff professional learning, allowing the entire staff to learn about the Data Dive process and how to involve students as partners. The impact was evident, as some teachers made changes in their classrooms the very next day. Imagine how this made the students feel about the power of their voices!



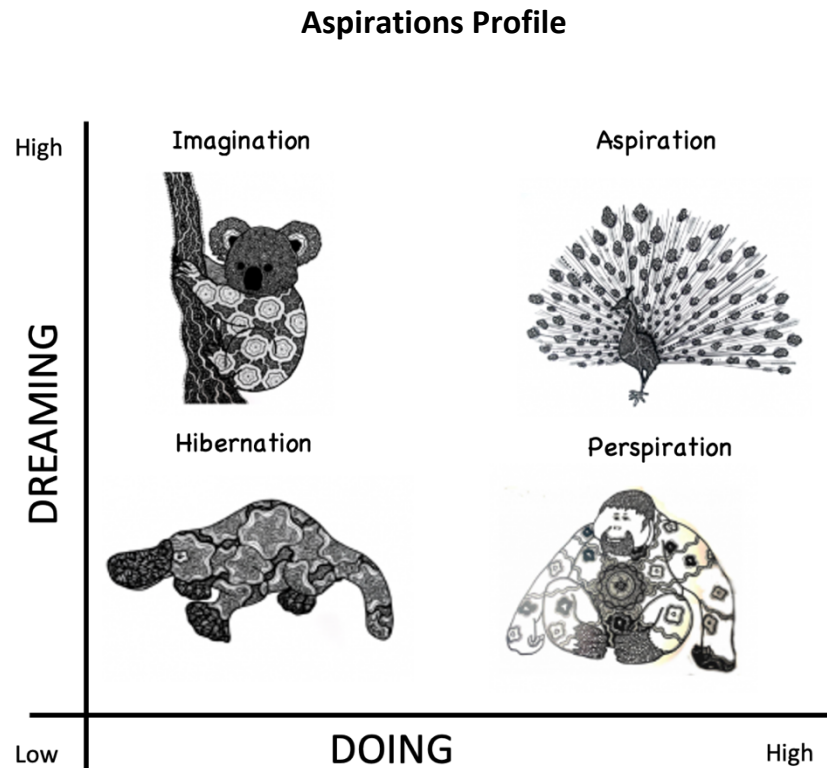
- 2023 Term 4
- More open SRC meetings set by topic.
 - 'Ideas and Concerns' box to be set up in the Barack center.
 - Wow Walls in each room, where students can choose which piece of work they want to share.
 - Each class will have a "this week in my life..." space, often a calendar, where we can share things to celebrate or times when we need support.

Whole School Professional Learning

Every school context is different, and the educators and students at each school are the experts in their context. The Quaglia Institute tailors whole school professional learning to best serve the needs of each school. Several schools chose to work with QISVA on an individual basis, collaborating and co-designing the learning for their students and teachers. This involved on-site learning and provided meaningful opportunities to speak with students and visit classrooms. Hearing students talk about their learning, seeing their excitement about being heard and valued and recognising firsthand how the school environment was impacted by students' ideas was an absolute privilege. Schools displayed flags to encourage inclusivity and incorporated deliberate spaces for students to express themselves and be heard. Cranbourne Secondary College created a MultiPride Wall, designed to promote cultural awareness where students from several Pasifika Nations designed and painted a wall to represent their home countries. Students at the college are encouraged to embrace and share their identities and interests, and students proudly lead several events throughout the year to demonstrate students' talents.

Recognising that effective professional learning needs to be ongoing, many whole school sessions took place virtually after school. These regular one-hour sessions with the Quaglia Institute allowed for valuable opportunities for staff to hear from colleagues regarding what they had been trialling in their classrooms. Learning included how staff unpacked the voice definition, how teachers gathered students' voices and ways to integrate all components of the voice definition into the curriculum. The opportunity to learn from each other is an invaluable way for teachers to share their voices, and a productive approach for assessing what is effectively improving student confidence and competencies *in the context of that school*, and what is not.

Mossgiel Park Primary School entered its third year of working with the Quaglia Institute, further embracing and using the Aspirations Profile to inspire students to aim for excellence. They commissioned a local artist to depict the animals selected by students in 2022 to represent the four quadrants of the [Aspirations Profile](#). Their continued focus on Voice & Aspirations led to a significant impact on students in 2023. **87% of students reported positive endorsement of student voice and agency in the 2023 Attitudes to School Survey data.** The hard work and consistent effort by staff and students at Mossgiel also resulted in the school being named an Influence School by the Victorian Department of Education in 2023. Their commitment to excellence and equity is inspiring. Congratulations Mossgiel Park Primary School!



School leaders reported that the steady and deliberate development of a common language across the whole school and developing student voice for *every* student resulted in improvement in wellbeing and learning outcomes. Improvements recorded by some schools include fewer outbursts on the schoolyard as students accepted others' decisions, more dialogic talk between students and increased engagement in reading.

As part of their strategic planning in 2023, many schools identified the need to improve student voice and agency and began the process by learning and adopting the Quaglia voice definition. Schools selected a voice team to oversee and drive the learning for both staff and students. Ongoing consultation with the QISVA Team ensured that professional learning was timely, inclusive, relevant to staff needs and aligned with school goals and targets. Each voice team was committed to linking voice skills with school priorities and supporting the staff's commitment to integrating voice capabilities and opportunities for students. 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.
- Student voice videos shared via social media and at national conferences.
- Implementation strategies co-designed by teacher leaders.
- Student-led inquiry cycles based on student voice data.
- Student-led professional learning.
- Whole school collaborative professional learning.
- Significant improvement in student self-reported voice and agency results.
- Integration of school voice practices within school improvement plans.
- Consistent practices across the whole school.

Students express their appreciation of the deliberate intention to activate students' voices:

'I'm not an add on, a token or a survey. My voice is something that I use every day in my classroom. I was born with it.'

'I'm safe to express myself when I know others will listen.'

'I think my voice is valued as people can learn from my ideas and I can learn from theirs as well.'

'Voice is in everything we do!'

'I feel like I'm appreciated, that she wants to help me. She doesn't just do it because she is a teacher and she has to.'

'I keep on trying even when things are difficult. I am always persistent. I'm starting to realise I can do it.'

'I'm going to be a leader in the future. We need to be unafraid to listen and learn from others. Even kids, they're more capable than you think.'

'You have to stop assuming what kids think and you have to take the time to stop and listen to what they have to say. That's just what a good leader does.'

Students from Guardian Angels, QLD

Innovation and Collaboration

The Quaglia Institute was approached by the NSW Department of Education Regional North directorate to support the learning of Directors of Educational Leadership (DELs) and a group of schools that were keen to enhance and integrate student voice. Dr. Russell Quaglia and the QISVA Team tailored an interactive session to highlight the alignment of the department's goal of embedding learner voice in decision-making and the development of voice skills to support students' sense of belonging, personal and social capability and critical thinking. This session also provided the DELs with a range of resources to support schools, including a newly created 'look fors' resource to help build school capability and assessment.

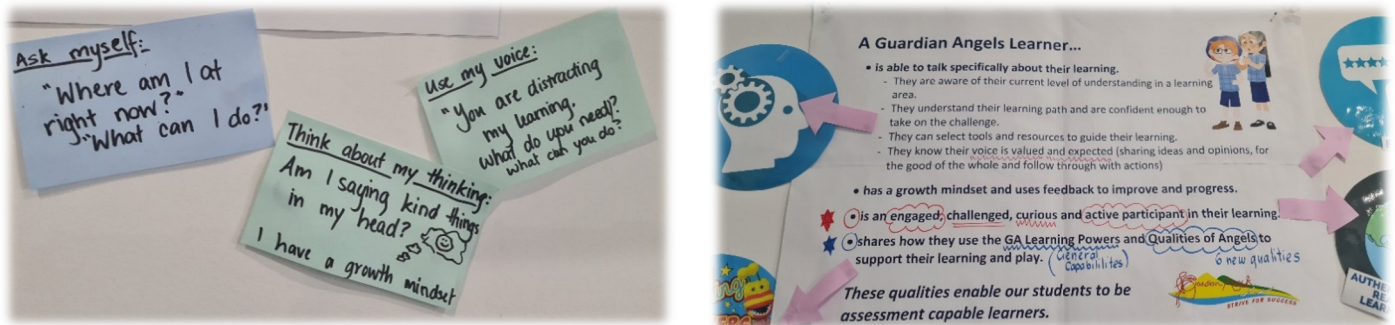
Working collaboratively with several DELs from the Regional North directorate, an Introduction to Student Voice workshop was designed for teams of students and teachers from various primary and secondary schools. The day was designed to engage students in activities and create opportunities to share their ideas in a way that bolsters their confidence to express their thoughts and make realistic suggestions for the good of the whole. Within their school teams, students and staff discussed insights about the conditions across their schools and brainstormed how students could use their voices to enhance teaching and learning. This meaningful dialogue and shared introduction to student voice created a solid foundation for student voice becoming a way of being across schools. The twelve participating schools committed to documenting their

implementation journeys to share with others during Term 2 2024. Schools will showcase the actions that represent their new way of working together—deliberately including the voices of all students in partnership with teachers to achieve school goals.



Student Voice Study Tour

After the success of the 2022 Student Voice Study Tour in Victoria, a second Study Tour took place in Queensland in October 2023. Hosted by Guardian Angels Primary School, this showcased the day-to-day work of staff and students where voice is a way of being across the school. Guardian Angels invited teachers and leaders from other local school teams to visit classrooms and see the voice work in action. Students confidently talked about how they use their voices in daily work, and the commitment to voice becoming a way of being was evident on classroom walls and school displays. Visuals around the school highlighted how the process of listening to and learning from all voices is embedded in discussions about school priorities.



A highlight of the Study Tour was listening to students share how significantly their learning has evolved and deepened as the school continues its voice implementation journey. The principal highlighted the importance of considering the processes and structures across the entire school and how voice must be embedded in all aspects of school, not just classroom practices. She shared, 'Voice underpins everything, our processes, practices, and language. It's not about a group of students or having a Voice Day. It's about voice in our relationships, learning and day-to-day actions.' The principal emphasised how it is important to use voice to understand school priorities, to inquire about shared beliefs and values and to seek connections between ideas and actions. Students' comments demonstrated how they see voice as a way to share diverse ideas and learn from each other. Students explained how they contribute to school improvement through participation in 'walk and talks' and are engaged in co-creating the learning environment and classroom displays. Students explained the power of using a common, consistent language and developing a shared understanding of how to behave, noting this was achieved by unpacking the new voice language together and co-creating expectations.

Participants' Reflections

Educators' feedback from professional learning provides valuable insights for the Quaglia Team regarding what is effective and what is needed to further support educators. Feedback from our work throughout 2023 includes the following:

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

Student voice provides agency and is highly important.

Student voice must be embedded into everyday practice.

Reflection is an important step. Every student has a voice and needs to be heard.

The importance of trust and it must be embedded in the whole school.

Actually listen.

Voice needs to be taught. It takes time.

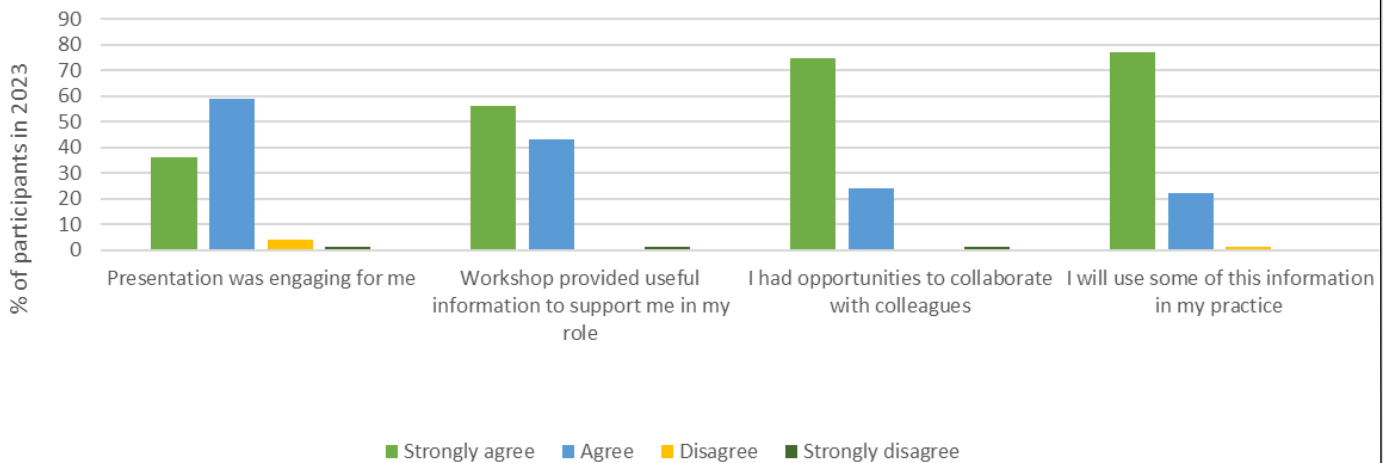
Voice needs to consider the greater good and should be ongoing and integrated into everything.

Choice and voice are not the same.

The impact voice has on Self-Worth.

Students having a voice prompts a better learning environment.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?










Quaglia Student Voice Surveys

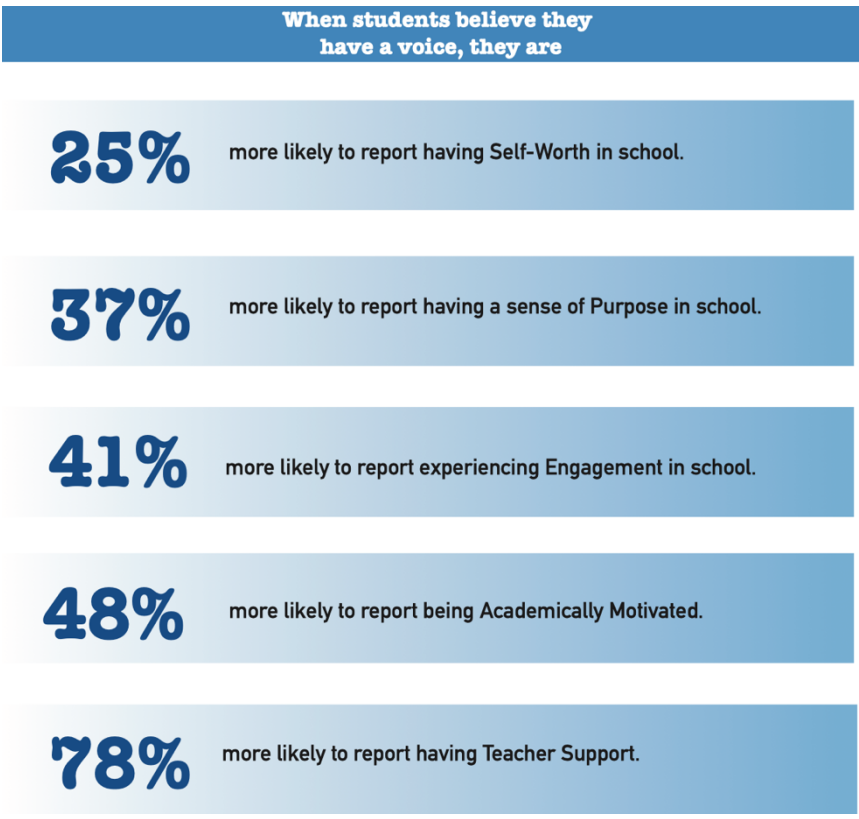
Student surveys are an effective way of gathering students' perceptions and insights into the school culture and climate. Quaglia Student Voice surveys are designed to provide a valuable opportunity for teachers and students to reflect on the conditions that exist in their school that impact students' Self-Worth, Engagement, and sense of Purpose. These surveys help launch students' active contributions to school improvement.

They allow students and teachers to discuss and highlight areas of strength at the school, as well as the conditions that students perceive as needing improvement. Working collaboratively, students and teachers can accept responsibility for creating positive changes for all students.

The Quaglia Student Voice surveys are designed to measure the following 8 Conditions that contribute to optimal voice and aspirations:

		8 Conditions		
			Belonging Heroes Sense of Accomplishment Fun & Excitement Curiosity & Creativity Spirit of Adventure Leadership & Responsibility Confidence to Take Action	

Whilst surveys provide valuable data, it is the process of genuinely seeking students' insights about the meaning behind the data—how they feel and experience school—that is impactful. We know that when students believe they have a voice, they have more meaningful learning experiences. Data from 103,125 students who took the Quaglia Student Voice survey shows that:



For more information on the Quaglia Institute's surveys, please scan the QR code.



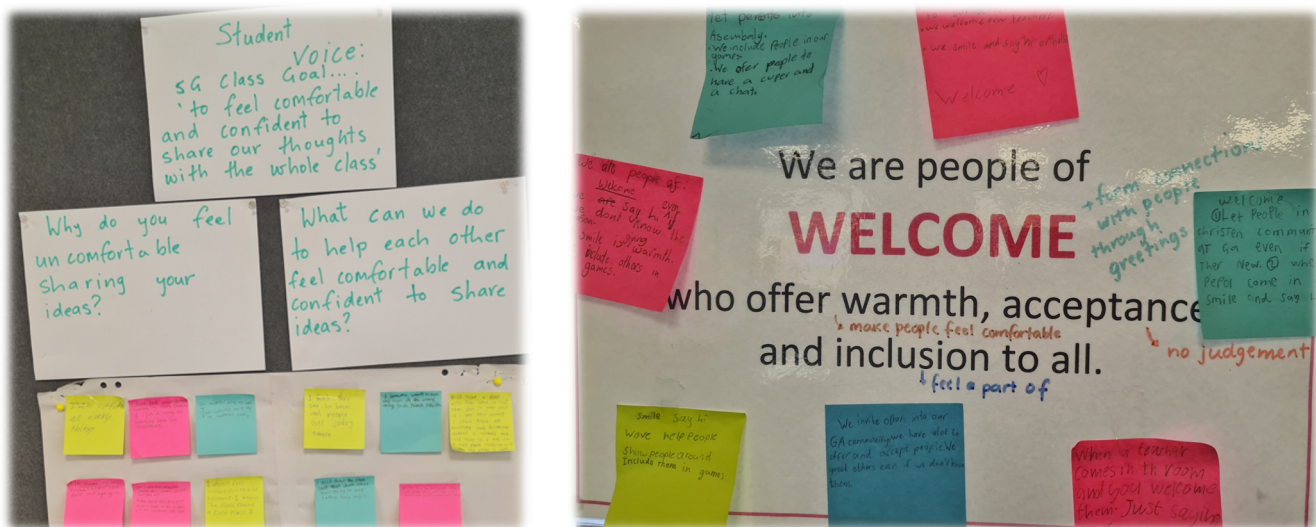
The Student Voice survey is administered to all students in a school and provides school leadership teams with a school-level look at student voice data. The Student Voice survey takes about 10 minutes to complete, results are available in real time, custom questions unique to each individual school can be added, and Next Practices specific to each survey statement are available. Data can be analysed by Year and a variety of other demographic filters.

iKnow My Class Survey

When voice is a way of being at schools, students and teachers value the perspectives of others, and surveys can be a meaningful way to discuss ongoing improvement and change in practices. Guardian Angels School in Queensland regularly uses the iKnow My Class survey to discuss and drive decisions to improve teaching and learning. This willingness to seek and act on feedback is apparent throughout the school, as students are genuinely enthusiastic about providing feedback and planning next steps.

Teachers utilise the iKnow My Class survey 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



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.
- Baamboozle's [Goals, Hopes and Dreams](#) game uses thought-provoking questions, requiring students to think about their future aspirations in a fun and interactive way.
- 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

The Quaglia Institute is committed to continuing to foster student voice throughout Australia. Our work thus far with educators and students has demonstrated their unquestionable commitment to integrating student voice and aspirations as an intentional part of teaching and learning. Teachers recognise that for students to be competent and confident individuals, students must have opportunities to share their ideas and seek out new challenges. Students regularly express their desire to be recognised as valuable contributors not only to their own learning, but to changes that impact the good of the whole. Schools recognise the diverse interests and skills of the student population and are committed to activating student voices.

Student voice is never passive; students have active roles as responsible members of their school communities. Schools that have worked with QISVA for several years have noticed a shift from focusing on student voice to embedding all voices as a natural part of teaching and learning. Building on schools' increasing awareness of the importance of improving student wellbeing and building student capabilities through student voice, our priorities for 2024 include:

- Highlighting with schools the connections between voice, wellbeing and learning.
- Expanding the use and interpretation of survey data in partnership with students.
- Extending voice and aspirations work across networks throughout AU regions.
- Seeking to enhance student voice and aspirations in rural and remote areas.
- Presenting 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.
- Collaborating with like-minded organisations and associations to maximise the impact of student voice.
- Connecting with system leaders and policymakers to highlight the impact of voice and aspirations professional learning.

You can find more information about how to partner with us to embrace and unleash the power of voice in schools on 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.

