

## Discussion Paper on the Youth Transitions System

### Response from Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated

**\*N.B. our responses are in reference to improving outcomes for Koorie students.**

Questions:

1. What form should the proposed literacy and numeracy standard take?
2. In what ways can the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills be strengthened in the post-compulsory years?
  - Age-appropriate courses (e.g. Certificate in General Education for Adults) that cater to low levels of literacy and numeracy without using materials that are better suited in primary schools
  - Culturally appropriate texts and materials that incorporate Koorie themes, personalities etc.
3. Will a career plan strengthen young people's engagement with education and their capacity to make informed study and career choices both during schooling and in subsequent education, training and employment settings?
  - Only if it is designed in consultation with a qualified and knowledgeable careers staff member, and only if it is afforded deliberation, and genuine interest. Career plans for Koorie students should also be devised in consultation with parents/carers and community.
  - Career plans also need to be individually tailored to students. Koorie students will need to feel valued and will need to be encouraged through this process. A culture of high expectations amongst careers staff will need to be developed if Koorie students are to reap the benefits of a 'career plan'.
4. What other actions should be taken to ensure that sound career development services are available to all young Victorians?
  - Again, the development of a culture of high expectations among education staff (particularly careers staff) in relation to transition and choices for Koorie young people.

5. How can business/industry be more involved in assisting students' career choices?
  - Business / industry should be setting targets to increase the amount of Koorie people they employ. Consequently, apprenticeship, traineeship and scholarship programs can be established in order to encourage Koorie young people into the workforce. These could be associated with qualifications, such as a Certificate III in Business (for example).
  
6. What would further strengthen the delivery partnerships between government and non-government schools and between schools and VET providers?
  - More flexibility in delivery – e.g. in terms of hours, financial assistance and support – e.g. for transportation, course materials, education support – e.g. for tutoring, study skills, and cultural awareness training for VET providers so that Koorie students feel welcomed and acknowledged – could tie in with pastoral care – Koorie Apprenticeship Field Officers?
  
7. What additional actions should Government take to support young people to complete initial qualifications in the VET sector?
  - Because a significant number of Koorie students participate in VET and VCAL , these options need to be financially accessible – the increases to the cost of TAFE education will have negative implications for participation (impede participation)
  
8. Would greater levels of institutional specialization in curriculum and qualification delivery result in improved quality of provision, and support increased student attainment of Year 12 or an equivalent vocational qualification?
  - Yes – it immediately becomes more relevant for students
  
9. How should schools, VET providers and system authorities use the new transparency and accountability arrangements in Victorian schools and the Victorian Student Number to improve the completion rate of Year 12 or equivalent qualifications?
  
10. What other strategies could be introduced to lift qualification completion rates for young people in the schools and VET sectors?

- Aboriginal Studies in the classroom
- Professional Development for all education staff (in terms of Cultural Awareness training)
- Koorie Mentors
- Koorie Liaison Officers / Koorie Career Counsellors
  
- The proposed Koorie Transitions Coordinator positions (to be employed across the DEECD Regional offices) will assist with engagement, retention, attainment levels and successful post-school pathways for Koorie young people.

11. How can businesses and industry be involved in increasing completion rates – especially for apprenticeships?

12. How can student transition to the VET sector, higher education and full-time employment be improved?

- Koorie Liaison Officers and Koorie Transitions Coordinators

13. What other steps are required to assist schools' connection to the world of work?

- A separate policy for Koorie young people would be welcomed

14. What other initiatives would improve school to tertiary education articulation and support young people to take advantage of the expansion of these sectors?

- As above

15. Should efforts to improve VET to higher education articulation and credit arrangements focus on particular occupational pathways and skill priority areas, for example in engineering and nursing?

- Yes – it immediately becomes more relevant for students

16. How can governments ensure that reforms to the VET and higher education sector address both skill needs and student demand for particular qualifications?
- Because a significant number of Koorie students participate in VET and VCAL , these options need to be financially accessible – the increases to the cost of TAFE education will have negative implications for participation (impede participation)
17. How can governments improve provision and articulation arrangements to better support young people, especially in regional and rural areas, to access tertiary qualifications without needing to re-locate?
- Increased online / distance learning options
18. What other actions should be contemplated by institutions and government?
19. How can Youth Connections be implemented in Victoria to most effectively re-engage young people with education and training?
20. What services should Youth Connection service providers use to establish effective referral and working arrangements?
- Integration / partnership with existing Koorie services
21. Should LLENs be provided some flexibility to facilitate and broker service provision to young people 20 and over, in line with the flexibility in Youth Connections service provision?
- Yes
22. Is the range of qualifications on offer to re-engage young people adequate? (Existing qualifications include VCAL, adult VCE, the General Certificate of Adult Education and the Diploma of Further Education.)
- Yes. However, the settings in which these qualifications are offered need to be examined. i.e. Why do more Koorie young people feel more comfortable in TAFE or ACE settings than in school environments?