### Business Working with Education

**A Summary of the Statement of Priorities for Partnerships between Business and Victorian Government Schools**

#### Priority Area Focus Partnership possibilities

**Opportunity**
- To create greater opportunities for all Victorian children and young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to achieve excellent academic, social and personal outcomes.
  - Improve literacy, numeracy and engagement through corporate volunteers.
  - Provide better access for students to specialist and extracurricular programs.
  - Support broad system initiatives that benefit students across Victoria, including through Victoria’s Koorie Education Strategy, Wannik.
  - Improve pathways and transitions for young people to participate in further education, training or employment after leaving school.

**Excellence**
- To have the best skilled and motivated teachers, and high expectations and excellence in outcomes for every child and young person.
  - Improve maths and science participation and achievement.
  - Provide opportunities for teachers and business employees to share and develop their skills and knowledge.
  - Provide scholarships and bursaries for identified groups of students to assist them achieve excellent outcomes.
  - Provide scholarships and bursaries for identified groups of teachers to assist them to lead excellence in outcomes for identified groups of students.

**Leadership**
- To develop a culture of strong leadership through effective professional development programs supporting school leaders in coaching and mentoring.
  - Support leadership initiatives that lead to improved organisational performance.
  - Empower children and young people to develop leadership skills by workshopping different aspects of leadership with business leaders.
  - Provide access to business expertise for school councils.
  - Participate in the Teach for Australia program.
  - Support broader leadership development and delivery in particular school networks or geographical locations.

**Community**
- To bring communities and schools together to create productive and worthwhile partnerships benefitting all community members.
  - Participate in place-based initiatives involving the development of cooperative and collaborative partnership arrangements or specific initiatives in particular localities.
  - Support Victoria’s Koorie Education Strategy, Wannik.
  - Support broader regional and statewide initiatives designed to build parents’ capacity to effectively engage in supporting their children’s education and development.
  - Create ongoing relationships with individual schools and school networks to build the capacity of the schools and school communities to achieve longer-term goals and outcomes.
  - Involvement in after-school programs.

**Economy and Society**
- To expand opportunities for children and young people to undertake learning and pathways in areas of skill gaps or labour shortages to the benefit of the economy and society.
  - Provide engaging experiences for young people to equip them with a wide range of academic and vocational pathways.
  - Involvement in Local Learning Employment Networks (LLENs) to help improve education, training and employment options for young people.
  - Involvement in programs that build the skill and confidence of young people and connect them with the world of business.
  - Partnerships with Victoria’s Trade Training Centres and help address skill shortages in traditional trades and emerging industries.

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**Getting Involved: Priority Areas for Engagement with Government Schools Education**

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<tr>
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<th>Focus</th>
<th>Partnership possibilities</th>
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Business partnerships are considered an integral part of a whole-of-community involvement in the development of a world-class education system in Victoria. The Victorian Government’s *Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development* (2008) strongly supports partnerships between business and schools.

The *Statement of Priorities for Partnerships between Business and Victorian Government Schools* provides guidance to business and schools to identify opportunities for partnerships.

The Statement is concerned with the application of corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities within the education system, and does not apply to the normal for-profit activity between schools and commercial providers.

Benefits of Partnership

Partnerships with schools can provide many benefits to business:

- Business can gain a level of community involvement and connection.
- Assist business to recruit, develop and retain a quality, multi-skilled workforce.
- Provide a platform for business and education to learn from each other about the variety of approaches to organisational management and development.
- Provide an opportunity for business to invest in the next generation of working Australians and their communities.
- Provide opportunities to meet corporate social responsibility goals.

The benefits of business partnerships to schools are also multifaceted:

- Enhance school capacity by providing a range of additional skills and resources to schools.
- Build long term capacity to deliver improved performance through better engagement, retention and individual support, particularly for disadvantaged children and young people.
- Add value by complementing the delivery of the curriculum, broadening experiences for children and young people, and improving access to high-quality and integrated services and operations.
- Support young people’s transition from school to further training or employment and offer professional development opportunities for staff.
- Enhance community confidence, support and connections with Victoria’s schools.

Getting Involved

The *Statement of Priorities* provides a framework for business and education to connect across five critical priority areas:

- Opportunity
- Excellence
- Leadership
- Community
- Economy and society

Turn over for examples of how business can get involved and partner with education.

Business Working with Education Foundation

The new Victorian Business Working with Education Foundation will provide business and philanthropy with increased options to support Victoria’s public education system.

The Foundation will, for example, focus on provision of support for schools in key areas, provide a contact point for business-education partnerships, broker and maintain partnerships and assist business to meet corporate social responsibility goals.

This new Foundation will direct support to existing foundations and not-for-profit organisations that are undertaking programs in areas of Government and Department priority.

The Foundation will commence full operation in 2011 and can be contacted at http://www.bwefoundation.org.au.

Support and Advice

The Department’s Education Partnerships Division provides support and advice about effective education partnerships.

Business and schools can contact the Division on (03) 9637 2525.