

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BROTHERHOOD OF ST LAURENCE AND BRUNSWICK

SECONDARY COLLEGE REGARDING THE TRANSITION PROJECT.

(DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION ONLY)

1. GENERAL

The Brotherhood of St Laurence and Brunswick Secondary College will work cooperatively to provide a service to support young people to leave school to undertake further education, training, employment or other relevant activity.

DETAILS OF PROVIDER

NAME:

Brotherhood of St Laurence
Employment Action Centre

ADDRESS

109 Victoria Street
Fitzroy Vic 3065

NAME OF CONTACT MANAGER

Ms Maria Alibrando - Deputy Centre Manager

NAME OF PROJECT WORKER

Ms Marzia Maurilli

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DETAILS OF PARTNER SCHOOL

NAME

Brunswick Secondary College

ADDRESS

406 Victoria Street
Brunswick Vic

NAME OF SITE PRINCIPAL

Graeme McKinnon

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON

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The situation for young people leaving school over the past twenty years has changed significantly. The two main features of these changes have been increased retention rates for young people completing secondary school and a deteriorating youth labour market. Retention rates have increased from approximately one third of students completing secondary school in the early eighties to two thirds completing by the early nineties. The employment situation has deteriorated from approximately two thirds of young people between 15-19 years being in the labour market in the sixties to one fifth of that age group in the early nineties. These changes mean that early leavers now constitute a minority of the population and have decreased opportunities finding an alternative career path through the labour market.

The trends in terms of both school retention and the labour market are cause for concern. During the past four years there has been a continuous decline in retention rates at school. At the same time the youth labour market through the nineties has shown a consistent trend away from full time employment towards casual and part time work. This situation allows for a group of young people to become marginalised in the labour market, alternating short term employment and unemployment and failing to gain recognised skills or experience. Those most at risk of becoming part of this group are those who have left school early and who have limited options for ongoing education and training. They may also be uncompetitive in a labour market which demands increasing levels of skills and includes many unemployed young people with higher levels of education.

3. TARGET GROUP

The target group for this project are young people who are still at school, but who are likely to leave school before completing Year 12 and who are at risk of long term unemployment and restricted training options unless linked into a training environment such as that offered by a Traineeship or other vocational activities.

This is not a homogeneous group. Early school leavers, or those at risk of leaving include ;

- leavers who make a positive choice to take an alternative career path;
- 'opportune' leavers who have found a job
- 'would be leavers' whose preference is to have a job but who are subject to "forced retention" because they would otherwise be unemployed;
- 'circumstantial leavers' who are forced out of school for non- education reasons;
- 'discouraged leavers' whose experience of school has not been rewarding;
- 'alienated leavers' who have found the school environment to be highly negative (Batten and Russell, 1995)

This project will work with a range of school leavers, although where the issues are best addressed by the young person or the school it will be important that this occurs.

From a careers perspective young people have been divided between the ;

- career determined : with minds made up already, possibly since early schooling;
- career confident : staying at school irrespective of their lack of specific ideas, but confident that the future will turn out well;
- career confused : those who respond to pressures from home with delaying strategies (eg. "keeping my options open") or by doubting the validity of the advice they receive; and
- career condemned : early school leavers with no definite plans and few prospects (NBEET, 1995)

5.0. PROJECT DURATION

The duration of the project is for two years (1997 - December 1998), subject to funding, with a review at the end of the period December 31st 1997.

5.1. STAFF/MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

The Brotherhood will employ a staff member to work specifically on the project. Management is by a designated Employment Action Centre Manager.

There will also be a part time researcher employed by the Brotherhood.

The project will have a base in the school and an opportunity to integrate into the school staff team as far as practical. Time will be divided between the Employment Action Centre and Brunswick Secondary College.

In the first instance the Project Worker will liaise with the Student Services Coordinator

5.2. SCHOOL BASED CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

The implementation of the project will be the responsibility of a school based coordinating committee which will include representatives of both BSL and BSC.

The representatives of the BSC will be :

- Student Services Coordinator
- VCE/VET Coordinator
- Futures Project Officer

The representatives of the BSL will be:

- Deputy Centre Manager
- Project Worker
- Research Officer

The school based Committee will be responsible for the :

- Further development guidelines and protocols;
- clarification of the roles of the project worker in relation to the VCE/VET Coordinator, Work Education Coordinator and other staff;
- development of referral process, including teacher, self and parent referrals;
- development of screening procedures to ascertain whether a young person should take part in the project;
- support the implementation of school level programs or activities for individual students, as appropriate;
- referral of young people back into the school based support system;
- development of a publicity strategy for the project within the school community;
- use of the project worker within the curriculum;
- development of the range of school based support options for young people considering leaving; and
- identification of areas of staff development.
- to inform, report and make recommendations regarding the development of school policies and curriculum to relevant school committees.

5.3. MEETING SCHEDULE

The school based coordinating committee will meet quarterly

5.4. CONSULTATION STRATEGY

A consultation strategy will be developed to involve students and the school community in the operation of the project.

5.9. COMPLAINTS/APPEALS

In the event that a young person or anyone else has a complaint about the operation of the project, or wishes to appeal a decision, the Project Worker will advise that person to contact the Employment Action Centre's Deputy Centre Manager.

5.10. DISPUTES BETWEEN THE BSL AND BSC

Should an issue arise between the BSL and BSC that cannot be resolved through the school based committee then the Site Principal (Brunswick Secondary College) and the Director of Community Services (BSL) would convene a meeting to resolve the issue.

5.11. REPORTING

The representatives on the school based committee will be responsible for reporting to their own organisations regarding the development of the project. In particular the representatives responsible will be ;

- Deputy Centre Manager - Employment Action Centre - Brotherhood of St Laurence
- Researcher - Social Action and Research - Brotherhood of St Laurence
- Careers Officer - Brunswick Secondary School

5.12. CONFIDENTIALITY

Client confidentiality will be respected. Both parties shall comply with the Privacy Act (see attachment 1). The Student Welfare Coordinator, in consultation with the Project Worker, will initiate contact with parents when necessary, and negotiate parental concerns and issues if they arise. All issues concerning the parents of students remain the responsibility of the school.

5.13. MANDATORY REPORTING AND OTHER PROTOCOLS

Where any suspected cases of child abuse concerning a student enrolled at the college are reported by the Project Worker to their supervisor (as detailed in the Brotherhood of St Laurence protocol on Child Protection, see attachment 2), the supervisor is obliged to inform the Student Welfare Co-ordinator at the college that a report has been made.

Expectations of students and staff is in accordance to the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, Brunswick Secondary College (see attachment 3).