EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF STUDENT ‘PARTICIPATION’ FOR IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCE OF SCHOOL

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Student disengagement is a persistent concern for schools and available evidence suggests it is increasingly occurring in the early years of schooling. At the same time, there is also growing evidence pointing to the importance of student participation in improving engagement with school. Several international studies have involved trialling and evaluating different models and approaches to student participation and how these influence student engagement as well as broader academic and social outcomes. However, very little is known about how participation is facilitated in Australian schools, what the most effective initiatives are, how and why these work, and importantly, whether participation does positively influence student engagement.

This research seeks to document and analyse current understandings, approaches, benefits and barriers to participation in NSW primary and secondary schools (metropolitan and regional), and to investigate the impact of these on student engagement within all domains of school life, such as curriculum, culture, governance and community.

The study incorporates a mixed-method approach and will generate important and timely knowledge about participation for theory, policy and practice. Key outcomes will include a conceptual model for advancing participation, as well as the production of a range of tested instructional tools and innovative programs to improve the way/s participation is approached in NSW schools.

The first phase of this project involves an initial pilot study involving schools in metropolitan and regional NSW, and the development of a resource package and survey about participation in schools for Principals throughout NSW.

PROJECT TIMEFRAME

November 2011 – November 2015

PROJECT PARTNER

NSW Commission for Children & Young People

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