How To Fix Education

Revolution School is a four-part documentary series about how to improve secondary education in Australia.

In 2008, Kambrya’s Year 12 results put it in the bottom 10% of secondary schools in Victoria. Revolution School follows the transformation of the school under the leadership of principal Michael Muscat. The series provides an honest insight into the challenges facing the students and staff at Kambrya College while also showcasing what really works in classrooms to improve academic results and student wellbeing.
Revolution School provides opportunities for students to discuss:
- their experiences of schooling;
- the daily challenges of school;
- the importance of education;
- how students learn;
- student wellbeing;
- the Australian education system.

This study guide to accompany Revolution School has been written for secondary students at all year levels. It provides information and suggestions for learning activities in English, Media, and curriculum projects discussing the issue of education. Revolution School can also be used as a resource to address the Australian Curriculum General Capability – Personal and Social Capability given the opportunities it provides for students to reflect on their experience of school, and manage their learning and wellbeing more effectively.

Teachers are advised to consult the Australian Curriculum online at http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/ and curriculum outlines relevant to their state or territory for further information.

The study guide is structured as a series of discussions about the ideas and issues raised in each episode. Teachers may select from the information and activities to support students’ viewing and close analysis of the documentary series. Teachers are also able to determine whether student responses will be presented as written, spoken or multimedia texts.

Key knowledge
This knowledge includes an understanding of:
- the text including events, characters, settings, ideas, issues and themes;
- the ways filmmakers create meaning and build the world of the text;
- the issue of education and the issues facing Australia’s education system;
- present findings in appropriate forms for different audiences and purposes.

Teachers are advised to preview the series prior to classroom screenings. In managing discussions, teachers should remind students that the focus is the ideas and issues raised by Revolution School. While students are able to comment on their own educational experiences, they need to do so in constructive and respectful ways.

Professional learning for Teachers
Revolution School is a useful resource for professional learning sessions related to teaching and learning and student wellbeing.

School leadership teams and teaching staff are advised to use the series to generate discussions about:
- Learning and teaching
- Literacy
- Student wellbeing
- Student engagement
- School improvement

The documentary series is also recommended viewing for students undertaking tertiary courses in Education and Teaching.

The Australian Professional Standards make explicit the elements of high quality teaching. Revolution School provides opportunities for teachers to develop their knowledge and understanding of the three domains of teaching:
- Professional Knowledge
- Professional Practice
- Professional Engagement

Recommended link: Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership http://www.aitsl.edu.au/home

In particular, Revolution School can be used to meet Standard focus area 6. Engage in Professional Learning:

6.1 Identify and plan professional learning needs
6.2 Engage in professional learning and improve practice
6.3 Engage with colleagues and improve practice
6.4 Apply professional learning and improve student learning

The content of the Revolution School study guide has been linked to the Australian Professional Standards. These links can be found throughout the guide. While school leaders and teachers are advised to view the episodes in their entirety, clips from episodes can be used in staff meetings and professional learning sessions.
Episode synopses

**EPISODE 1**

Across Australia, education standards have been slipping. International expert, Professor John Hattie, from the University of Melbourne’s Graduate School of Education, has researched what is most effective to lift students’ results, and at the request of Principal Michael Muscat, he is helping Kambrya College to achieve school improvement.

The school introduces new classroom methods in a bid to improve learning for both gifted and average students. But with more than 1100 students, there are plenty of day-to-day dramas.

Assistant Principal Jo Wastle has difficult conversations with several students including fifteen-year-old Tiarne, who disrupts classes with attention-seeking behaviour, and thirteen-year-old Jamin who has troubles at home. Tiarne gives her English teacher Peter Wallis an especially hard time, and she blames it on the fact she was bullied at school. Internationally renowned classroom discipline expert Dr Bill Rogers helps Mr Wallis settle his class, regain control and keep everyone engaged.

Teacher Grace Wong, recently graduated, tries to overcome the ability gap in her classroom, and uses technology to make a breakthrough. She is encouraged and supported by Assistant Principal Nalini Naidu.

**EPISODE 2**

Kambrya College’s motto is ‘Maximising the potential of each student’. Principal Michael Muscat and his teaching staff are intent on getting the best out of the school’s students, be they high-achievers or strugglers in danger of dropping out. Currently 25% of Australian children do not complete Year 12 but Kambrya makes every effort to keep students at school.

Year 11 student Rachel wants to study medicine, so she needs to be in the top 1% of students Australia-wide. Rachel’s parents pressure her to perform, which causes her stress at home and school. They meet at school to try to resolve their differences. Jamin’s father is also called in to discuss his son’s suspension for bringing drugs on campus. For Mr Muscat, Jamin’s situation is both a disappointment and dilemma.

Kambrya College’s Darrabi program has been established to support a group of Year 9 boys who have struggled in mainstream classes. The boys are unruly.
and under performing, so teacher Martin McDonald and Assistant Principal Keith Perry plan a bush trek to build their self-esteem.

NAPLAN testing takes place and Kambrya decides it needs to further improve its reading results. The school calls in expert Di Snowball, who shows teachers a simple but effective method for improving literacy. At the start of each class, students must spend time reading a book. The students embrace the program, and the immediate results are impressive.

**EPISODE 3**

Principal Michael Muscat seeks advice about student wellbeing from Professor Lea Waters of the University of Melbourne’s Graduate School of Education. She measures students’ emotional wellbeing at Kambrya and suggests ways to improve it, and the benefit is evident for a group of Year 8 students.

Monitoring student wellbeing is especially important during the senior years of secondary education. Year 11 student Rachel benefits from the support she has received at school. She mends her relationship with her mother and knuckles down to study for exams. For the senior students at Kambrya, Rachel included, school connectedness and self-esteem is fostered through the Deb Ball. Year 12 student Tausif is bright but procrastinates, putting in doubt his ambition to excel in his final exams. Teacher and Senior Sub-school Leader Sarah Hewat reminds Tausif what it takes to achieve. Ben, who is in the vocational Year 12 stream, is juggling adult demands as he tries to finish his final assignments. He is able to talk through the challenge of competing priorities with Assistant Principal Keith Perry.

The Darrabi boys are out of their comfort zone as they start their bush trek. Along the way they discover personal strengths they did not know they had. Back at school their newfound determination leads to better results and they graduate from Darrabi with proud parents looking on.

Students like Bailey, who finds himself in trouble when he punches another boy, is able to draw on the guidance of Kambrya’s school counsellor Andrew Reeves and engage in mediation sessions that use a Restorative Practices framework.

**EPISODE 4**

It is nearing the end of the school year and Principal Michael Muscat is working hard to continue the improvement that began when he took over in 2008, at a time when Kambrya’s results hit rock bottom.

Reputation is all-important, so the school showcases itself and stages its own musical production. Children from the local primary schools attend a matinee performance and get to see first-hand what Kambrya College has to offer.

Professor John Hattie visits and helps teachers including Deborah Blee re-focus on what works best in the classroom to increase learning rates. She embraces Professor Hattie’s suggestions and the results are uplifting.

Tiarne is nearing the end of Year 10 but she has hardly been at school. Assistant Principals Jo Wastle and Keith Perry do all they can to help her pass, and she just pulls through, writing an essay on courage and submitting it by text. Former Darrabi student Michael has transformed from troubled teenager to role model and puts himself in the race for a school leadership position, up against the articulate Chelsea. Tausif continues to under-perform as his dedicated teacher Sarah Hewat frets about her students’ final results.

As the 2015 school year draws to a close, Michael Muscat is thrilled by not only how the school’s reputation has grown but how Kambrya’s approach to school improvement shows the way for schools across the nation.
Revolution School was an enormously complex, challenging and ultimately rewarding experience as a documentary maker.

The brief was ambitious: To make a nationally significant series on the state of Australian secondary education, by focusing on the lives of the students, teachers, and staff at a typical suburban high school.

To link the unique story of a school to the national big picture meant understanding the daily events at the school in the wider context. That meant understanding a vast amount of research on education. Our aim was to tell the story of Kambrya while introducing the audience to the specialist research in education that lies behind what the school is trying to do.

The risk was that the two aspects would not work well together, since students and indeed teachers can't be expected to understand and act according to knowledge a university researcher has spent decades accumulating.

It was also a challenge to work so closely with kids and a very close-knit community of teachers and staff. As filmmakers our job was to begin as outsiders, and maintain that sense of distance and objectivity, whilst becoming a very familiar and intimate part of the school community. That meant a huge focus on building and maintaining trusting relationships with students and teachers alike.

Our team was small, comprising myself as series producer, two director/camera people (Naomi Elkin-Jones and Nick McInerney) and a production assistant (Georgi Savage). We worked in the school out of an office we were given for the whole 2015 school year.

Being on site everyday meant we quickly became a part of the school community. We were all humbled by the open, welcoming and receptive attitude of all the community at Kambrya College. This is particularly so given how courageous the school was to open itself up to the scrutiny of documentary cameras.

Always mindful of this and the background of the more undesirable excesses of modern reality TV, our aim was make an honest yet serious series about life in school for our kids.

There was constant dialogue between the teachers, leaders and staff in the school, and we tried to work very much on a model of ‘co-creation’ to tell the story of how Kambrya has gone about raising standards and improving outcomes for students.

This meant openly showing the issues and how the teachers work to overcome them, and at times this was uncomfortable for staff and students. Yet to everyone’s credit, they stuck with the process and therefore we were able to show how powerfully Kambrya overcomes the challenges it faces.

They are by no means unique problems and issues. In fact the experience for teachers and students at Kambrya is pretty typical of life in high schools right across Australia. That is what makes the series so important and I believe worth watching.

It was certainly a privilege to have the opportunity to work with such a wonderfully warm and dedicated group of teachers. Working in this collegiate framework meant great personal and professional relationships were formed, and it was enormous fun to work alongside the teachers and staff, and above all the students at Kambrya. I would dedicate this series to them with thanks.

The experience has made a lasting impression on all of us, and it is this that is ultimately the most wonderful part of the job that we do as filmmakers.

Alex West – Series Producer

© ATOM 2016
Kambrya College

Kambrya College is a Victorian Government secondary school in Berwick, an outer southeastern suburb of Melbourne. Having achieved a VCE Median Study Score of 30 in 2013, the school ranks in the top 20% of government schools in Victoria.

When the College opened in 2002, it was known as Berwick South Secondary College. It began with a cohort of 97 Year 7 students and 15 staff. By 2007, the school had experienced extraordinary growth, with an enrolment of over 1,550 students and 150 staff members. The current school population is now 1100 students and 87 staff members.

In 2003 the school changed its name to Kambrya College. ‘Kambrya’ means ‘meeting place’ in the local indigenous language of the Wurundjeri people.

Kambrya College prides itself on being a school with high expectations of all students and all staff. The school motto is ‘Maximising the potential of each student.’ The College offers quality pathways for students wishing to pursue academic or vocational pathways. Destination data shows that almost every student leaves the school with a valuable qualification.

Why Kambrya College is a revolution school

In 2008 Kambrya College hit rock bottom. Grappling with a huge student cohort, disorder and lack of direction, Kambrya ranked in the bottom 10% of schools in Victoria based on VCE scores. And on virtually every other indicator the school was failing abysmally.

Since becoming principal, Michael Muscat has responded to what he calls ‘institutional confusion’. He elaborates, ‘We were achieving very poor results and we needed to do things differently. There was a very compelling case for change.’

Over the last eight years Kambrya College has revolutionised itself. Through strong leadership, a focus on innovative teaching techniques and bold strategies deployed in partnership with the Graduate School of Education at Melbourne University the school is a model for how an under-performing school can turn itself around.

The Survey

Revolution School makes frequent references to “the survey”. The national survey, conducted in conjunction with the series indicates serious misconceptions about the most effective ways to raise Australian academic standards.

During 20 years of research analysing more than 70,000 studies involving 80 million students from around the world, Professor John Hattie has established what is most effective to improve student learning. His findings challenge the opinions of survey respondents. Hattie has found that teaching which involves goal-oriented, specific feedback to students, and positive teacher-student interaction, have the most impact on learning growth.

- More than three quarters of Australians incorrectly think smaller class sizes have a positive impact on academic achievement.
- Fifty two percent of survey respondents believe wearing a school uniform has a positive impact on students’ results. Hattie’s research has found it has no impact at all.
- When asked if the academic achievement of secondary school students was better at single sex schools compared to co-educational schools, only a third correctly answered that it was not.
- More than two thirds of Australians incorrectly think that regular homework is essential for students to succeed at secondary school.
- When asked if the standard of teaching in private schools promoted greater academic growth among students compared to teaching in government schools, 43% wrongly answered yes.
- Only 34% correctly answered that there was no difference between private and public schools in terms of student’s academic growth.
- Nearly a third of Australians under-estimate the number of hours teachers work each week. The survey also found two thirds of people think teaching is a worthy profession but ranked teachers behind doctors, lawyers, university lecturers, elite athletes and nurses in terms of perceived status in our society.
- More than two thirds of people think schools should place more emphasis on literacy and numeracy, but only 13% strongly agree that Australia should push secondary students harder to outperform Asian countries.

Recommended link:
http://www.kambriacollege.com/
The experts

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JANET CLINTON

Associate Professor Janet Clinton is the Director of the Centre for Program Evaluation at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne. Clinton has wide national and international experience as an evaluator, psychologist, and educator with an extensive publication record. She is the author of numerous book chapters, journal articles and commissioned reports.

PROFESSOR JOHN HATTIE

Professor John Hattie is director of the Melbourne Education Research Institute at the University of Melbourne and chairman of the Federal Government’s Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).

A straight-talking academic, Hattie’s passion is trying to understand, measure and share what makes a difference in the classroom. His study on what really matters to help students learn and progress has been described as the ‘holy grail’ of effective teaching and he is arguably the world’s most influential education researcher.

Hattie’s 2009 book, Visible Learning, is the largest ever collection of evidence-based research into what makes a difference for students, ranking the factors which most improve learning. It was the culmination of 15 years of research, incorporating more than 70,000 studies on schools involving millions of students globally.

Born in New Zealand, Hattie grew up in the regional port city of Timaru, and after school worked as a house painter before going to university and gaining a teaching diploma. He gained his PhD in 1981 and has worked at universities around the world before taking up his position in Melbourne in 2011.

DR BILL ROGERS

Dr Bill Rogers is an education consultant and Honorary Fellow, Melbourne Graduate School of Education.

Rogers is a teacher by profession but now spends his time lecturing on discipline and behaviour management in schools, and how to help teachers manage stress. He has taught at both primary and secondary schools, and began his consultancy work in 1985 when he worked with the Victorian Education Department to promote whole school approaches to behaviour management and student welfare, within a framework of rights and responsibilities.

Rogers has written numerous books including Cracking the Hard Class: Strategies for Managing the Harder than Average Class’, and Behaviour Management: A Whole School Approach’.

DI SNOWBALL

Literacy consultant, Di Snowball began teaching in 1972 and quickly realised she did not have enough training in how the children in her Grade 1 class in Melbourne would learn to read and comprehend. Snowball took it upon herself to find out all she could, and over time developed a six-step strategy for teaching reading which has achieved dramatic results in low-performing schools both in Australia and overseas. Snowball has written several books and articles about literacy teaching and has produced videos demonstrating the most effective teaching practices.

PROFESSOR LEA WATERS

Professor Lea Waters is Director of the Centre for Positive Psychology, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne. Waters is a psychologist who has held an academic position at the University of Melbourne for the past twenty years. She often speaks in public about positive education and parenting, and has worked with more than 100 schools across Australia, Asia and Europe.

The Centre for Positive Psychology aims to advance the science and practice of wellbeing for students, teachers and education systems at primary, secondary and tertiary level. The Centre assists schools to create positive cultures.
My School website

The My School website was established to provide parents, schools and the community with information about academic results and the socio-economic characteristics of Australian schools. It displays data collected in NAPLAN (National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy) tests, which are conducted every year in schools for students in grades 3, 5, 7 and 9.

My School now has eight years of data which means student achievement can be tracked to see how much learning growth students have achieved in literacy and numeracy at individual schools from Year 3 to 5, or Year 7 to 9. This can be a useful pointer to the effectiveness of teaching in the school, and how much schools are adding to students’ learning.

The data enables comparisons to be made among schools serving students from similar socio-educational backgrounds, for example schools with a high percentage of students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Recommended link:
http://www.myschool.edu.au

Melbourne Graduate School of Education at the University of Melbourne

The Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) is one of the world’s foremost education faculties. On international rankings, it has placed in the top 10 education schools in the world consistently over the last five years, alongside such revered institutions as University College London, Harvard, Stanford, Cambridge and Oxford.

It is Australia’s top ranked education school, and teacher education at the MGSE is open only to post-graduate students. It takes approximately 800 students a year in early learning, primary and secondary school teaching streams, many of whom have had successful careers in unrelated areas.

Every applicant must sit a Teacher Selector test which asks about previous experience and reflections on teaching. There is a literacy and numeracy component but the test also assesses applicants’ disposition, personal characteristics, communication style, ethics, and cultural sensitivity.

Dean of the MGSE, Professor Field Rickards, says the Masters trains graduates in what he describes as ‘clinical, evidence-based teaching’ so they can accurately assess and meet students’ learning needs. Rickards believes this evidence-based approach to teaching is the key to improving results for Australian students, and for putting teaching on a par with the medical profession.

Critically, every Masters student spends two days per week at the University’s partnership primary and secondary schools so they are better prepared for the classroom when they graduate.

• Professor John Hattie: The majority of debates in the policy arena, in the press, amongst the parents, and critically among the teaching profession are about the things that don’t matter much.

As you watch Revolution School, list what the experts believe ‘does’ and ‘doesn’t’ matter when it comes to education.
The staff

MICHAEL MUSCAT | PRINCIPAL KAMBRYA COLLEGE

‘I love working with the kids at Kambrya College. They’re the salt of the earth sort of kids and we take a lot of pride in striving to the nth degree to meet their needs.’

Michael Muscat has been a teacher for 39 years, and Principal at Kambrya College in outer suburban Melbourne for the past eight years. He took charge when the school was at a low point and has led Kambrya through a period of intense cultural change and academic improvement.

Muscat grew up in Melbourne and decided to become a teacher because he wanted to have a positive impact on the lives of young people. He began his career in rural Victoria, teaching history, geography and English, and is passionate about helping students become effective learners and achieve success through their turbulent adolescent years.

A hands-on principal, Muscat knows his students well. He is open to new ideas, and has a focus on building strong teamwork amongst the teachers and instilling a culture of high expectations at the school. He believes the biggest issues facing secondary education in Australia today are to keep improving the quality of teaching, and to address the growing gap in resources between the state and non-state school sectors.

KEITH PERRY | ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL KAMBRYA COLLEGE

Assistant principal Keith Perry can make the tough calls with students when they are needed but his genuine care for the students at Kambrya College is always apparent. He grew up near Bendigo in rural Victoria and began teaching 12 years ago after earlier jobs in journalism and public relations. An English and Literature teacher, he turned to education because he was craving a career where he could build genuine relationships and change lives for the better. He has a special interest in student wellbeing and positive behaviour management and oversees Kambrya’s Darrabi program which assists teenagers who are at risk of disengaging from school.

JO WASTLE | ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL KAMBRYA COLLEGE

Jo Wastle’s interest in student wellbeing and engagement at school is apparent in every interaction she has with the students at Kambrya College. Wastle is firm but fair and caring, an approach that stems from her strong belief that every student should experience success at some level. She studied applied science, majoring in geology, and also studied horticulture before she turned to teaching. She began her career 14 years ago, and has been at Kambrya all that time. Wastle has witnessed the school go through many changes and has been a key driver of the transition from an overcrowded and disorderly environment to a school the community is proud of.

Keith Perry can make the tough calls with students when they are needed but his genuine care for the students at Kambrya College is always apparent. He grew up near Bendigo in rural Victoria and began teaching 12 years ago after earlier jobs in journalism and public relations. An English and Literature teacher, he turned to education because he was craving a career where he could build genuine relationships and change lives for the better. He has a special interest in student wellbeing and positive behaviour management and oversees Kambrya’s Darrabi program which assists teenagers who are at risk of disengaging from school.

NALINI NAIDU | ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL KAMBRYA COLLEGE

Assistant Principal Nalini Naidu, believes that teaching is the most important profession in the world. She grew up in Durban, South Africa, and began her career there before moving to Australia, where she has taught geography and psychology. A teacher for 32 years, Naidu now oversees the curriculum development at Kambrya and puts in place programs to help teachers become more effective in the classroom. She loves seeing students develop during their time at secondary school and become ready to take on the world.

Teachers may choose to revisit the question asked prior to viewing Revolution School by asking students – What makes Kambrya College a good school?

Getting started

Prior to viewing Revolution School, ask students to mind map their answer to the following question: What makes a good school?

Having watched Revolution School, provide students with an opportunity to express their opinion of an episode or the series, to ask questions and to comment on the ideas and issues raised in an episode or the series.

Teachers could also use the following question to initiate discussion: Does Revolution School offer a realistic portrayal of secondary education in Australia?
Episode 1 – Professional Learning

Episode 1 provides opportunities for educators to engage in professional conversations linked to the following focus areas of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). Focus areas are noted in italics at the end of discussion points.

Discussion points

Back to school

Episode 1 begins on the first day of the school year. Assistant Principal, Nalini Naidu gently hurries the stragglers along, ‘You guys need to hurry up please. You don’t want to be late on your first day.’

• Student 1: We got back from Brisbane two days ago. I don’t wanna be here right now.

Student 2: What timetable?

Michael Muscat: Students are coming in this morning and we’re all set. Looking forward to a great day. It’s a beautiful summer day. Let’s get started, can’t wait!

How do you feel on the first day of a new school year? Do you think that different year levels feel differently about the first day of a new school year? How do you think teachers feel on the first day of a new school year?

• Tony: I don’t understand any of the work. I can’t tell the difference between an activity book and a textbook.

Tony’s father: He told me last night. He said he loves Kambrya.

Jo Wastle: Do you know what I have a feeling Tony that there are probably twenty other kids sitting in the class maybe having the same questions as you.

Twelve-year-old Tony is feeling overwhelmed by the demands of Year 7.

Can you remember starting secondary school? Share your memories of being in Year 7 with the class.

School uniforms

Assistant Principal Jo Wastle claims she is not the most popular staff member given she is responsible for enforcing the school’s uniform policy. In Episode 1, she is alert to infringements,

‘We all know that the first day back is a challenge for uniform and there are a multitude of reasons that kids come up with for being out of uniform. We help students develop and understand structure in their lives by putting some really tight frameworks and what the expectations are for
them while they are here at school.’

- Jo Wastle: Now, I am loving those shoes that you have on but I don’t think they are quite right for school so can you just not wear those ones again?
  - Jo Wastle: What’s going on with your ears?
- Why does Mrs Wastle enforce the school uniform policy?

- What is a school uniform?
  - Make a list of the advantages and disadvantages of a school uniform?
  - What is your school’s uniform policy? Would you like to make a change to your school’s uniform policy?
  - If your school does not have a uniform, what is the dress code policy? Would you like your school to introduce a school uniform? Why?
  - Why is there a need for a policy that provides guidelines about student dress and appearance?
  - Does wearing a school uniform provide a student with a sense of belonging? Is this at the expense of individual identity?
  - Does wearing a school uniform improve student behaviour? Does a school uniform create discipline as Mrs Wastle suggests or does it give students something to rebel against?

APST: 4.3 Manage challenging behaviour

Attendance

Tiarne’s absences from school have impacted on her academic progress. She has not been able to catch up on time missed and now finds herself in Year 10 and unable to cope with the demands of the curriculum.

- Tiarne: I am not coming to school tomorrow. What will Tiarne achieve by skipping school?
  - Jo Wastle: I guess from where we’re coming from you’re in Year 10 now and you’ll be hoping to move into Year 11 so it’s really, its absolutely essential that you are at school every day, yeah. Does that sound like a bit of a plan?
  - Why is Mrs Wastle insistent that Tiarne attend school every day?
  - What is your school’s attendance policy? What are the advantages of the policy? Are there any disadvantages?
  - How do you catch up when you have missed a day of school? Share your strategies with others in the class.

APST: 1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students

Homework

Tiarne is refusing to complete homework. She thinks it is an injustice that having attended six lessons in a school day that she is expected to go home and continue learning. She tells Mr Wilson, ‘I’m not doing it.’ For the high-achieving SEALS, such as Erythrina homework is also a source of stress,

‘Some people are struggling to do their homework and they appear to have stress. But there’s not really that much stress if you know how to organise your stuff, then you’ll be fine.’

- How does Mr Wilson respond to Tiarne’s complaints about homework? What does his decision to play games just for fun with the SEALS suggest about his understanding of how to respond to student needs? Why is it important to strike a balance when it comes to homework?
  - Like Tiarne, do you think homework is too much to ask after a seven-hour school day? Or, is homework a ‘necessary evil’? Have you ever found yourself doing too much homework?
  - List the pros and cons of homework. Which list is the longest?
  - Does your school have a homework policy? Use PMI to critique your school’s homework policy. Based on your identification of the plus, minus and interesting aspects of your school’s homework policy, compile a report that recommends how the policy could better meet student needs.

APST: 1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students

When surveyed nearly 70% of parents responded that enforcing regular homework will improve results.
Like the surveyed parents, do your parents believe that completing homework will improve your results? Do you agree with Professor Hattie that parental expectations about homework can have a negative consequence? What do you think Professor Hattie means when he suggests that parents should talk to their children about learning rather than about school?

APST: 1.2 Understand how students learn

Acceleration

Nayeer: My goal from like Year 4 was to get into a high achievers or a SEAL. So if I got put down to a normal class then I’d probably be a little upset. My goal is to like be the best I can.

Nayeer: When I was in Year 6 I didn’t learn anything, same as in Year 4 and 5.

Romal: The thing I was really worried about in Grade 6 was if I was getting enough education or not. Everything was like really easy in class I mostly slept through class because it was really boring.

Brooklyn: SEAL maximises your potential and well that’s the school logo. Umm, motto.

Cam Denham: The beautiful things about the SEAL program because it’s designed for acceleration, if the students want to move fast and want get to a higher level quickly we’re ready, we’re ready to get there.

SEAL stands for selected entry accelerated learning. The SEAL program has been implemented to support school improvement at Kambrya College.

- What is accelerated education?
  Does your school offer an accelerated education program? Why?
  What are the advantages of accelerated learning programs? Do you think there are any disadvantages?

- What does Kambrya College hope the SEAL program will achieve?

Erythina and Nayeer are SEALS. In Episode 1, they make the following comments about their parents’ expectations: ‘There’s no pressure; it’s just that sometimes I get pressure from my Mum. She’s like have you got everything done? Stuff like that. She makes me feel like upset. My Mum’s really mean sometimes.’ – Erythina
  ‘They want me to do my best. They want me to be at the top not the middle of the class, which is quite hard.’ – Nayeer

Regarding parental expectations, Mrs Wastle is of the opinion, ‘Often parents want for their children what they didn’t get. So often they pin all their hopes and dreams on their child which can be really quite heartbreaking when we see that unfolding in front of us, so we have to really spend time working with the parent on those sorts of things. And give the parent permission to let the child make a mistake.’

Moving schools

In this episode of Revolution School, Professor Hattie claims that the effect of moving from school to school is ‘very negative’. The survey conducted prior to filming Revolution School indicates that parents underestimate the damage of repeatedly moving schools. In regard to changing schools, Mr Muscat is of the opinion,

‘The unfortunate thing about the chopping and changing, is that, like with many transitory students you don’t actually get the opportunity to deal comprehensively with the issues, with the problems that they have.’

- Students in the class who have experienced the move from one school to another may be willing to share their experience with the class.

Thirteen-year-old Jamin is refusing to go home. He has been moving between the homes of his divorced parents but is now living with his father and stepmother. Having moved schools frequently, Jamin has not had the opportunity to forge a sense of belonging.

- Jo Wastle: Why can’t you go with Dad? You need to tell us Jamin. You need to talk to us about what’s going on because we need to fix this.
  Michael Muscat: We look at the problem and we don’t sort of shy away from the problem that is presented but we say look here is an opportunity for you. You can have a new beginning here with us.
  Melinda Jolly: He’s got plenty of hope because he wants to, I think, be here. He actually explained that it’s nice to be back at school. He doesn’t want to be the one left behind. How do the staff endeavour to foster Jamin’s sense of connection to Kambrya College?

APST: 3.7 Engage parents/careers in the educative process
APST: 4.1 Support student participation
APST: 7.3 Engage with the parents/careers

Spend time as a class, discussing parental expectations and aspirations for their children’s educational achievements. This discussion can also be broadened to encompass what parents expect of schools and what parents expect of teachers.

APST: 1.5 Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities

Completion rates

One in four Australian children fail to complete Year 12. Kambrya College is endeavouring to reduce its dropout rate and keep troubled students at school.

- Jo Wastle: Best-case scenario for Tiarne at the end of the year is that she finishes the end of the year and she travels through to Year 11. She certainly doesn’t have the skillset to leave yet, she’s too young, she’s too immature, she’s got
Dealing with challenging behaviour

Jo Wastle: We had quite a high level of disorder across the school.

Michael Muscat: Teachers felt unsafe to go on yard duty.

Keith Perry: I was probably breaking up fights every second day.

Helping Mrs Wastle keep order is sub-school leader Brett Wilson. Just two hours into the new school year Mr Wilson is called to sort out a problem. Year 10 student Tiarne has been ejected from her Maths class for aggressive behaviour.

- Brett Wilson: The phone starts to ring before school normally in our office. It directs your day very quickly. I get seen around the school with my thinking face on and there’s been an ongoing joke for a couple of years about how I never smile. Umm, it’s not true.

What reasons are given for Tiarne’s behaviour? What strategies are used to change Tiarne’s behaviour? Do these strategies make a difference?

- Jo Wastle: The balance with Tiarne is we have to keep her at school and engaged but we also have to help her modify her behaviour. So she still needs to understand that there are consequences for poor behaviour.

What does Mrs Wastle’s comment suggest about the challenges of dealing with students like Tiarne? What did you think when Tiarne expressed her desire to go back to Year 7 and start over?

- Peter Wallis: So our productivity has gone down in the last five minutes.

Having met with Dr Bill Rogers, Mr Wallis decides to implement a new teaching strategy to improve student engagement in his Year 10 English class.

Does the graph help Mr Wallis’ students to stay on task? Prior to trying the strategy, Mr Wallis was nervous about how the students would respond. Does he rate the strategy a success?

- Dr Bill Rogers: Punishment rarely changes behaviour. What are we really doing when we discipline children? Are we controlling them or helping them to control themselves? Do you agree with Dr Rogers that ‘punishment rarely changes behaviour’?

When Mrs Wastle investigates an allegation regarding the possession of a marijuana grinder, she learns that it may belong to Jamin. Jamin is questioned by Mrs Wastle and Mr Wilson but denies the allegation. When his bag is searched, the discovery of the grinder, an amount of marijuana and a pipe indicate that Jamin has not been telling the truth. It is the first drug seizure at the school for five years.

- Michael Muscat: Let me just tell you something Jamin, my number one concern at this school is for the welfare of the whole school. Right? The whole school. Now your action presents to me a threat to my school, to my students and I don’t play with that. I have zero tolerance of this stuff at school, zero.

How does Mr Muscat respond to Jamin’s misconduct? Is his response reasonable?

- Dr Bill Rogers: Punishment rarely changes behaviour. What are we really doing when we discipline children? Are we controlling them or helping them to control themselves? Do you agree with Dr Rogers that ‘punishment rarely changes behaviour’?

APST: 1.2 Understand how students learn
APST: 3.3 Use teaching strategies
APST: 3.5 Use effective classroom communication
APST: 4.2 Manage classroom activities
APST: 4.3 Manage challenging behaviour
APST: 6.4 Apply professional learning and improve student learning
APST: 7.4 Engage with professional teaching networks and broader communities
Episode 2 – Professional Learning

Episode 2 provides opportunities for educators to engage in professional conversations linked to the following focus areas of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). Focus areas are noted in italics at the end of discussion points.

Discussion points

Improving reading

The dominant focus of Episode 2 is literacy, in particular reading and how to teach it so a student’s ability to read improves, as does their enjoyment. Principal Michael Muscat is of the view that,

‘Without doubt if we’re going to work towards every student maximising their potential, strong literacy skills are an absolute non-negotiable essential aspect of that.’

Di Snowball is a literacy consultant. In Episode 2 she underlines the importance of reading,

‘We know that even if it comes just down to test scores, the more children read the higher the test scores are; the more children read the more their vocabulary grows; the more they’re able to do and understand everything else in their lives better. So it’s that one element that can make a huge difference to everything else they do.’

Kambrya College is drawing on her expertise to help improve reading. The school uses a popular literacy program that teaches students to read short sections of text rather than whole books. Having made a significant investment in the program, the Literacy team are uncertain of the recommendation to abandon the approach and begin again.

- Roz Muscat: Why is reading important?
  If you were asked this question, how would you respond?
- Di Snowball: Okay. Do you ever read books in your English class?
Student: I think we’re going to start that in term two. Di Snowball: Okay but there is nothing on a regular basis each week or each day or when you read? Student: No. Why does Di Snowball question Kambrya’s literacy program? • Many of Kambrya’s students are not reading books. Recent studies reveal more than sixty percent of Australian school children are not frequent readers. Do you read for enjoyment? Do you like reading the class novel? Do you borrow from your school library? Your task is to create a survey about reading. Use online survey software to create the survey. Aside from the questions listed above, what other questions will you ask the student cohort that you choose to survey about reading? After you have analysed the survey data, prepare a presentation for your school’s Literacy team.

Having spoken to students at Kambrya College, Di Snowball concludes,

‘It’s frustrating because the children are not actually reading. The whole reason for learning all of this is to read better, but if you are not actually reading then what’s it for?’

Her decision is to introduce a new reading program at Kambrya. To do so she needs to bring the school’s literacy teachers with her. Kambrya’s literacy team inspect an innovative reading program at another outer suburban secondary school. The program is called Independent Reading.

The survey for this series reveals most Australians think there should be a greater emphasis on literacy, yet Independent Reading programs are rare in Australian schools. Di Snowball explains why this may be the case,

‘I think the reason why people are not doing this as much is because there is such a pressure of jamming everything into the curriculum that they’ve forgotten about just leaving time for students to read. Particularly at secondary school. You can’t suppose they’re going to read at home so if you don’t set aside some time for it at school it may not happen at all.’

Kambrya College decides to trial Independent Reading. Di Snowball returns to witness the results. She is impressed by the transformation of Kambrya’s approach to literacy,

‘You are just going so well. It’s like leaps and bounds. It’s just incredible. I would never have expected to see so much in such a short time ever. So it’s extraordinary.’

• Poly Tzimourtas: I have got a couple of kids who have never read a book and actually think of it as something that would say that they despise, they actively hate reading and to actually look out into an audience of previously reluctant readers and to see them actually being actively engaged in their texts is just pure happiness for me. I love it.

Nalini Naidu: We’ve realised there’s a lot of merit to what Diane was saying. Reading is beyond just having independent strategies with small texts. It is to instil this love of reading.

Student: I thought it was really good because we used to never read books in class. It helps you develop the skills you need for not just in English but in other classes too.

What is Independent Reading? Why does Kambrya College decide to trial Independent Reading? Is the trial a success? Have you ever participated in an Independent Reading program? Would you like to? Ask a teacher who has watched Revolution School, if your class can try this technique.

APST: 2.5 Literacy and numeracy strategies
APST: 3.5 Use effective classroom communication
APST: 3.6 Evaluate and improve teaching programs
APST: 4.2 Manage classroom activities
APST: 6.3 Engage with colleagues and improve practice
APST: 6.4 Apply professional learning and improve student learning
APST: 7.4 Engage with professional teaching networks and broader communities
Expectations

- Rachel: Year 11, it’s a big jump from Year 10. Rachel: I look up to a lot of the Year 12s and try to compare myself to them and I think how am I ever going to get to that stage? Like how am I going to survive through all that? As someone who has made the transition from Year 10 to Year 11, do you agree with Rachel? Or Do you think that Rachel’s claim of a ‘big jump’ is true of the transition from every year level to the next? Does your school have a transition program? Does this program support students in moving from year level to the next? How can schools improve students’ experience of transition from one year level to the next?

For Year 11 student Rachel, the pressure of achieving excellent academic results exacts a toll. Rachel’s Year 12 ATAR must be amongst the highest in the state if she is to study medicine. Support from home has helped underpin her ambition to succeed but is now proving a source of conflict. While Rachel sets high standards for herself, the expectations of her parents cause her to falter during Term 2. Rachel’s parents are worried that she may be distracted by the concerns of a teenager’s world and so they impose restrictions that she believes are unfair.

- Rachel: Ever since I was six I told my parents I wanted to be a paediatrician. I want my Mum and Dad to be proud of me because that’s one of the main things we’ve always talked about. I am just worried that I won’t do well.
- Sarah Hewat: Rachel has incredibly high expectations of herself. She knows that she’s very able and she expects the best from herself at every situation, and that can be quite stressful for her.
- Cassie: By other people’s standards I think we’ve in the past we’ve been considered quite strict, but we believe in pushing our children.
- David: We certainly have a very, very strong belief in education and you know getting the most that you can out of it. I think partly because we didn’t. Have Rachel’s parents anything to be worried about? If you were in Rachel’s situation what would you do? If you were Ms Hewat, what advice would you give Rachel’s parents?
- Take time to reflect on your expectations when it comes to school. What do you want to achieve from your education? How are you working to achieve these expectations? What do your parents expect you to achieve at school? What do your teachers expect of you? Do your expectations and the expectations others have of you ever clash?

- Professor John Hattie: Parents can be incredibly important in kids lives, in terms of the expectations they have of the kid, the encouragement and the way they talk to the kids about learning. And that happens regardless of your postcode. Postcode need not be your destiny. Biggest effect of parents is the expectations and encouragement they give their children.
- Sarah Hewat: For a lot of teenagers the pressure that they feel from their parents can often be interpreted as they’re not good enough; they’re not doing enough; they’re not smart enough. And so that can be a bit of a tension. Particularly with high achieving kids. How do your parents support your learning?

In Episode 1, Jamin brought marijuana to school. Mr Muscat decides not to expel Jamin but warns that any further breaches of school rules will result in suspension and possible expulsion. Despite Mr Muscat’s decision, Jamin’s father sends his son to spend time with extended family in Lebanon. Just before the end of Term 2, Jamin and his father return to Kambrya College to discuss Jamin’s pathway.

- Michael Muscat: You know we’re dealing with children. You never, ever write them off but we do expect you to make an effort. How do the staff at Kambrya College support Jamin to make changes for the better?
- Jamin’s father: I have quit work just to stay beside him and try to help him as much as I can. If I can see him taking the right way then, then that would be a million dollars for me. I don’t care. That’s my concern now. How does Jamin’s father support his son to make changes for the better?
- Jamin: I was getting involved with the wrong people and doing the wrong things and at one stage I was with the police and stuff like that. That is when my Dad he came, he went to the station and picked me up from there. Trust me it is hard. You don’t want to be on the street. Trust me. That is why I am here. Just you know try and get involved in something, start doing something because I haven’t been doing anything for how long now? Has Jamin learnt from his mistakes? How have his expectations of what he can achieve changed?

APST: 1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students
APST: 3.7 Engage parents/ carers in the educative process
APST: 4.3 Manage challenging behaviour
APST: 7.3 Engage with the parents/carers

Darrabi

Professor John Hattie: Once a kid forms a sense of where they fit in the classroom it is really tough to change it and the bad news is they often know by about age eight where they fit. Sure enough one of our jobs as teachers in the system is to mess that up. Is to find things in kids that they didn’t think they were good at and show them they can be good at these things, show that they can be good learners.

Darrabi is a Kambrya College curriculum initiative to support students at Year 9 who are at risk. The objective of Darrabi is to re-engage these students so that they can return to mainstream classes prior to moving into Year 10.
• Jo Wastle: Can you tell us why it is that you find yourself coming here to Kambrya College?
Nathan: Because I made stupid choices at my last school.
Jo Wastle: Okay, what sort of things were you doing?
Nathan: Being aggressive I guess and violent and I was with the wrong crowd and I was getting blamed for doing a lot of things. I just got in a lot of trouble. But I haven’t always been like that.
Having been expelled from another school, Nathan, who is new to Kambrya College, wants to join the Darrabi program.
What does the conversation between Mrs Wastle and Nathan reveal about Nathan’s decision to join the Darrabi class?
• Marty McDonald: Darrabi is a unique program. I guarantee nearly every school in Australia’s probably discussed a certain Darrabi type in its past but they’re probably all too scared to execute it.
Marty McDonald: It’s an all boys group in Year 9. Some of them are low-level learners. Some have behaviour issues or they have been in trouble or school refusers, they are not really enjoying school. So Nathan will be number eighteen in the group. So it is a lot smaller than a normal size, so it just gives us more opportunity to spend more on one on one time with the boys to get a better understanding of where they’re at and how we can actually assist them.
Nathan: We know that we’re a bit not intelligent as the rest of us, but we’re sort of trying to get back up to where we are meant to be and we’re not giving up on ourselves anymore so it’s real good.
Michael Muscat: Just because you’re in Darrabi doesn’t mean you stay in Darrabi regardless of what you do. We have high expectations of you guys. We want you to rise to that occasion. Not take advantage of it. What is the purpose of the Darrabi program? What is the value of the Darrabi program? Who benefits from the Darrabi program?
• Marty McDonald: Sometimes you almost second guess yourself as their teacher, are you the right person to help these boys succeed?
Mr McDonald teaches the Darrabi class.
What challenges does he face? Do you think Mr McDonald is the right teacher to help the Darrabi students succeed? Why?
• Marty McDonald: I sat down with Mr Perry to have a discussion in, to try and involve something to obviously assist you guys with you know working through a few difficulties and we both sat down together and decided that we would like to take you boys away on a four day camp.
Keith Perry: I am really hoping that it is going to set them not just up for the rest of the year but also hopefully it is going to be something that they look back on fondly and have learnt a lot about themselves and about each other.
Why do Mr Perry and Mr McDonald decide to take the Darrabi class camping?
• Keith Perry: I am hoping that you boys are feeling some sort of authentic shame for your actions yesterday as a pack and I use that word pack because that is exactly how you guys acted. You acted like a pack of wolves. On the eve of the Darrabi Camp there is an incident in the playground. When the boys were told to stop spitting by a yard duty teacher they just laughed at her. The trip is suddenly in jeopardy.
How do the Darrabi boys make amends? Are they genuinely contrite?

APST: 1.5 Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities
APST: 3.2 Plan, structure and sequence learning programs
APST: 3.5 Use effective classroom communication
APST: 3.6 Evaluate and improve teaching programs
APST: 4.2 Manage classroom activities
APST: 4.3 Manage challenging behaviour
APST: 6.3 Engage with colleagues and improve practice

NAPLAN

Professor John Hattie: People are worried about our declining standards, particularly in literacy and numeracy because those are the building blocks for all the other things we do in schooling and that’s what really makes the difference to whether students stay in school and be successful.

One of the givens of Term 2 is NAPLAN testing. For students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9, NAPLAN tests are the three most stressful days of the school year calendar. The NAPLAN tests are a nationwide barometer of literacy and numeracy standards. NAPLAN results can make or break a school’s reputation.

• What does NAPLAN stand for? What is the purpose of NAPLAN? What is the value of NAPLAN?
• Keith Perry: We try and certainly make sure we nurture the kids through the day. It can be a bit of a tough week because there’s like test after test after test.
How many NAPLAN tests have you ‘survived’?
• Michael Muscat: We use the data that comes to us as a snapshot. Our data ends up on the My School website and people will look at that and make judgements about us. Does NAPLAN data make a difference?
• A vox pop is an opinion expressed by a member of the public in response to a question asked by a journalist. The name comes from ‘vox populi’ - Latin for voice of the people.
Your task is to ask a variety of people to share their opinion of NAPLAN. Compile the responses in the form of a newspaper article.

APST: 2.3 Curriculum, assessment and reporting
APST: 2.5 Literacy and numeracy strategies
APST: 5.1 Assess student learning
Episode 3 – Professional Learning

Episode 3 provides opportunities for educators to engage in professional conversations linked to the following focus areas of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). Focus areas are noted in italics at the end of discussion points.

Discussion points

Student wellbeing

Schools and teachers play a critical role in the wellbeing of young people. Research indicates that student wellbeing has both direct and indirect effects on academic engagement and achievement by increasing:

- student engagement with and participation in learning;
- student motivation to participate and achieve;
- student attendance and hence increasing school completion;
- positive behaviour at school and hence decreasing levels of suspension and exclusion from school and learning opportunities.

Kambrya College’s Student Wellbeing team is led by Andrew Reeves, who left the corporate world to become a school counsellor. He is well aware of the significant mental health issues in the region where Kambrya College is located.

‘So in the City of Casey, there were some really significant mental health issues a few years back. We had what is called a suicide cluster. Youth suicide rate just went through the roof. Yeah so that is something, which really, really impacted the school in a huge way.’

Andrew Reeves: I have just got a few concerns we need to address about your daughter. She said today that she was down at the train tracks and standing on the tracks with a train coming and she sort of just moved off you know just before it came along. She said she is still feeling like that now.

Andrew Reeves: Okay, he’s been marked as unapproved.

Andrew Reeves: So a teacher has just brought in an exam that one of our students has just completed with some concerning comments on the back of it…So the kid has written in the essay that there has been physical violence in the home.

What does the footage of Mr Reeves at work suggest about his role and his commitment to his role?

Andrew Reeves: Pretty much in every school there is
always that you know one or two per cent of students who are really struggling with mental health issues.

Professor Lea Waters: Kids as young as seven are being clinically diagnosed with depression and anxiety.

Jo Wastle: Australia has one of the highest youth suicide rates. This is very concerning for not only the school but the community in general and the whole country, and we have to take every warning sign very seriously.

Professor Lea Waters: What we also know is that if a young person experiences mental illness during adolescence they are three times more likely to re-experience mental illness in their adult life. Is it difficult for adolescents to speak openly about their mental health? Is it difficult for adolescents to access help? How can schools support student mental health? Your task is to research the status of adolescent mental health in Australian society.


Drawing on your research, compile a 5 slide PowerPoint presentation that provides an insight into an aspect of adolescent mental health.

• Jo Wastle: You made a conscious choice today that needs to stop. That conscious choice needs to be I am going to walk away.

Bailey: Yeah, I wasn’t exactly planning it to be honest. I have tried walking away. That is all I have done in the last school and primary school. I am tired of walking away.

Every schoolyard has its tensions. Sometimes they explode. Fifteen-year-old Bailey has been called in to see Mrs Wastle for punching a classmate; not once, but eight times. Bailey joined Kambrya half way through the year after moving out of his Mum’s home to live with his Dad.

How does Mrs Wastle approach Bailey’s misbehaviour? What reasons does Bailey give to explain his actions? Is Mrs Wastle’s decision to suspend Bailey the right decision? How does Mr Reeves support Bailey?

• In Episode 2, Rachel’s wellbeing was compromised by self-expectations and the expectations of her parents. While she has restored her relationship with her parents, her anxieties about her Year 12 results continue to cause her anxiety.

How does Ms Hewat help Rachel to control her anxiety about her ATAR result?

Rachel acknowledges, ‘Without thinking about it I’ve been putting all that pressure on myself that’s been more counterproductive than anything else.’

When it comes to school what stresses you out? How does stress impede academic achievement? Does stress ever improve academic achievement?

• Professor John Hattie: Particularly for teenagers emotions are often what it is all about. It is our feeling, it is our reaction, it is our interaction with others, and it’s how others see us. That’s the core being, particularly when you are an adolescent. And so if you deny that in a school you are denying the experience. Do you agree with Professor Hattie’s claim about teenagers and emotions? Based on your experience of schooling, do you think schools are good at responding to teenagers’ emotions?

Visible Wellbeing

Professor John Hattie believes that wellbeing can be taught, ‘This notion of wellbeing or as I would call it respect for self and respect for others those are taught skills. And I think we should have a responsibility for teaching those kind of skills in our schooling system.’

Mr Muscat endorses this approach, ‘The way we see wellbeing at Kambrya is not an airy-fairy mollycoddling exercise. It’s about developing programs and approaches that build self-awareness, that build resilience.’

• Many schools offer programs that help students to be optimistic and resilient.

Make a list of the student wellbeing initiatives that are implemented at your school. What do the students think of these initiatives? Who do you think benefits from its strategies?

During Term 3, Kambrya College works with psychologist
Professor Lea Waters from Melbourne’s Graduate School of Education to introduce Visible Wellbeing. The Visible Wellbeing Instructional Model helps teachers build student wellbeing in the classroom. It incorporates ideas from three evidence-based education movements: Positive Education (University of Pennsylvania), Visible Thinking (Harvard Graduate School of Education) and Visible Learning (Melbourne Graduate School of Education). Kambrya College is the first secondary school to trial the program.

- Professor Lea Waters: The last thing I am going to do today is say that you as a teacher should be a therapist. The other thing I am not going to do today is tell you that you should cheer up.

Sarah Hewat: Teachers get easily overwhelmed with all of the things we have to do and someone coming in and saying okay now we have to worry about this visible well being business can be quite daunting. Why do you think Professor Waters begins implementing Visible Wellbeing with staff prior to introducing the program to students?

- Sarah Hewat: One of the hopes I have for Lea working with us is that we will actually stop some of the kids who end up in the care of Andy and the wellbeing team. They will have the tools to have actually sort of pulled themselves out of that scenario and they’re then able to engage in school a little bit more effectively. They’re feeling better as a person and then they become better as a learner.

Based on your viewing of Revolution School, what are the challenges of implementing Visible Wellbeing? Based on your viewing of Revolution School, what are the perceived benefits of Visible Wellbeing? Do you think Visible Wellbeing should be introduced at your school?

- During a Visible Wellbeing class, Ms Hewat asks her students, ‘Can you describe what wellbeing looks, sounds and feels like?’ How would you answer this question?

Tashia: I imagine my brain like a little bucket right and if there is stress, like heaps of stress and then you have only a little room for studying so if you like tip out all the stress then you have more room for studying. Using Tashia’s explanation as a model, share your personal analogy of stress management. Tashia: For coping with stress I did swimming and reading because that helps me cope with stress. How do you cope with stress? Share your strategies with the class.

After piloting Visible Wellbeing, Professor Waters surveys students to measure its impact. She explains,

‘We have developed a tool to see whether the Visible Wellbeing approach is working. It’s an online survey that we administer in the class and what we’re looking to see is whether there has been any shifts in those well being indicators before the students went through a visible well being approach and after.’

- Sarah Hewat: The program that we have rolled out is making a difference by not only giving them a sense of happiness and satisfaction and resilience, we’re also giving them the chance to learn and that’s just, there is no lose in that. It’s just win, win.

Is the Visible Wellbeing program a success?

APST: 1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students
APST: 3.6 Evaluate and improve teaching programs
APST: 4.4 Maintain student safety
APST: 6.3 Engage with colleagues and improve practice
APST: 6.4 Apply professional learning and improve student learning
APST: 7.4 Engage with professional teaching networks and broader communities

Restorative Practices

Restorative Practices is a strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those damaged through bullying. It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and forgiveness by the victim. Kambrya College endorses this approach in managing student behaviour,

‘It’s essential to have very strong relationships in a school setting so when things break down between students its essential that we try and build that relationship back up. So we do that through Restorative Practices. And it means that we give both parties an opportunity to be heard and an opportunity to express how they’re feeling.’

- How can Restorative Practices improve student wellbeing?
  How can Restorative Practices improve student behaviour?
  Does your school use Restorative Practices?
  Or
  Do you think your school should use Restorative Practices?

- Jo Wastle: So the purpose of this discussion is to try and get you guys to come to some resolution so that you can coexist nicely with one another in the schoolyard. Jo Wastle: I don’t expect you to be friends but I think certainly I would like to see how you’re feeling about the possibility of shaking each other’s hands and saying okay we have mucked up but we’re prepared to move on.

Despite counselling Bailey’s feud with Aiden has continued. How does Mrs Wastle use Restorative Practices to resolve the conflict between Bailey and Aiden?

APST: 1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students
APST: 4.3 Manage challenging behaviour
APST: 4.4 Maintain student safety
Priorities

Like Rachel, Year 12 student Tausif has big ambitions,
‘I wanted to do medicine for a while now. If I work as hard as I can then hopefully I can get into medicine. If I don’t work as hard then I guess I won’t. Holding me back I guess is procrastinating. Like last night I was trying to do Physics homework and I started at 6:30 and I actually started at 8:30.

- Sarah Hewat: Tausif is incredibly brainy. He’s got a natural gift for understanding things. He’s definitely got the potential to chase his dreams but he doesn’t back himself nearly enough. He is plagued by a lot of self-doubt but he is a real larrikin. He’s constantly finding distractions and pranks where he could be focused on other things.

Like Tausif, do you procrastinate when it comes to studying?
Tausif admits that television and YouTube videos can distract him for hours.
When it’s time to study, what are your top three distractions? How do you maintain focus?
Try this two-step process for 24 hours and report back to the class:
Step 1: Identify distractions.
Step 2: Remove distractions
- Sarah Hewat: What are you doing?
  Tausif: I am looking at university courses and what not, to apply for next year.
  Sarah Hewat: Maybe you should finish Year 12 first.
  Tausif: Maybe I should do both.
  Sarah Hewat: Mmm, but right now maybe you should be studying, given that it is study period.

How would you describe Tausif’s relationship with Ms Hewat? How is Ms Hewat having a positive impact on Tausif’s learning?
Mr Perry makes the following statement about staff-student relationships:
‘You can’t have good quality student outcomes without having relationships with kids and whilst it’s important to be direct and to maintain high expectations it’s also important to allow kids to think that you know you are approachable. They, they can trust you, that you are there ultimately to support them.’

What role do you think positive and respectful relationships between staff and students play in improving student outcomes?
- Ms Hewat has the results from the trial exams. The results are a key indicator of how her students are likely to perform in the final exams.

How does Tausif respond when he learns of his result?
Kambrya College has a significant VCAL cohort. VCAL stands for the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning.

- What is VCAL? What is the purpose of VCAL? What is the value of VCAL? Does your school offer any applied or vocational learning courses?

Revolution School profiles VCAL students Ben and Lauren as they endeavour to meet important coursework deadlines. Ben has his future mapped out,

‘Five years I want a full time job, whether it be personal training or in the police academy, not police academy, like a police officer as such. Wife, my wife. A baby on the way. No doubt about it. I am going to commit a hundred and ten percent.’

Much to Lauren’s frustration, Ben is not taking the deadline as seriously as she believes he should,

‘He is just one assignment off and he has got to go to work right now to earn money so and he doesn’t want to take time off work. I don’t know why. He is just going to have to come back next week.’

- Ben: You go to school for thirteen years for some old guy to sign a piece of paper to say that you are competent in Year 12 so.
  Is Ben’s frustration with the system understandable or is he just making excuses?
- Keith Perry: Look coursework deadlines always present some interesting scenarios with students. I have heard just about every excuse I think under the sun.
  Deadlines – love them or loathe them? Have you ever used a ‘creative’ excuse?
- Keith Perry: Students sometimes do have conflicting agendas and some students unnecessarily overcommit themselves to things like work.

Keith Perry: They will prioritise a bit of extra money over you know what is really the most important thing, which is actually getting their education.

Professor John Hattie: There are many kids who think that school is not the place for them. They’d rather be out there earning money, getting a car, being like their peers, well that may be great for three of four years but once they get in their twenties they’ll realise that the opportunities will dramatically be constrained in terms of what they can do.

What are your priorities? Have you ever found yourself overcommitted? Have you ever put your part-time job before study? How do you manage your priorities or do you need help managing your priorities?

What does Professor Hattie’s comment make you think about the importance of getting your priorities right?
- What does the conversation between Ms Hewat and Mr Perry about who has and hasn’t submitted coursework indicate about their commitment to student success? How does Mr Perry support Ben to achieve success? Does Ben value Mr Perry’s support?

APST: 1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students
APST: 3.1 Establish challenging learning goals
APST: 4.1 Support student participation

© ATOM 2016
Building resilience

Low self-esteem underlies many of the behavioural issues with the Darrabi students. The objective of the Darrabi Camp is to build resilience. Many of the boys have barely been out of the city. A four-day hike lugging twenty-kilo-gram packs is a daunting prospect.

- Keith Perry: It’s going to be a real good circuit breaker for these boys. They need it, a really good opportunity to prove themselves, challenge themselves. It is not going to be easy. They’re going to have a tough time. They’re going to have to build a bit of resilience and show a bit of character, work as a team. And hopefully, you know, they come back as changed young men. Does the Darrabi Camp make a difference?

Keith Perry: You need to be able to transfer some of the resilience and the courage and the guts that you build from this: you need to take it back to school. Next time you are battling with that maths problem think about it. Think back to this moment and go you know what I got tested beyond every bit of my capacity that I ever thought I would and I managed to overcome it, I managed to push through.

Do the Darrabi boys take all that they have learnt back to school? Have the school camps that you have attended made a difference?

In 2008 twelve students were expelled from Kambrya College. Darrabi has helped reduce expulsions in recent years to zero. Revolution School takes the audience to the Darrabi graduation ceremony.

- Michael: I was chosen to be in Darrabi because I hated school a lot. I struggled work wise in all areas of my learning…The program has helped me to focus better. My reading has improved, so has my grammar. The Darrabi programme has given me great success. It’s made me a better person. It was a great experience for all of us.

Dominic: I was a student who took school as a joy ride; I was very loud and disruptive… I would like to finish year twelve to become educated. I promise you, you will witness a new me.

Jake: It brought us all together and brought us as a family. The Darrabi program has helped so much in every way, my Maths, English, and most of all my attitude towards school and teachers and my behaviour. What do the boys’ comments reveal to be the value of the Darrabi program? What do their parents’ comments suggest about the difference Darrabi makes?

The next challenge for the Darrabi students is the transition back into mainstream classes. Mr McDonald approaches the subject honestly,

‘Next week will be tough but just think back to all the tough times you had throughout the year and how you got through them. Have faith in your ability and what you have achieved so far and take it with you.’

- Michael: I reckon all the students are gonna look down on us and call us drop kicks. I wanna show people the opportunity they gave me and how I think I have actually succeeded and show that Darrabi is probably the best program for kids like us and to change us into great people. Why do you think the filmmakers decided to include this statement?

- Many schools have recognised the benefits of offering programs that allow students to move beyond conventional classrooms and conventional curriculum. Some schools have outdoor education programs or residential campuses where students spend part or all of the school year. Other schools, target year levels and provide programs that give students opportunities to pursue topics that they perceive as relevant.

Interview a student who has participated in one of these programs. Ask them to share their experience and to comment on what they learnt from the experience. Make a videotape of the interview. Edit the interview and then working as a class, compile the individual interviews to form a short film that investigates the consequences of alternative ways of constructing and implementing curriculum for adolescents.

APST: 1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students
APST: 3.1 Establish challenging learning goals
APST: 4.1 Support student participation

The value of co-curricular activities

Co-curricular activities are experiences that complement, in some way, what students are learning in school. Most schools offer a variety of co-curricular activities that allow students to pursue individual interests and achieve success beyond the classroom. Year level and whole school co-curricular events promote student belonging and build school connectedness.

- What co-curricular activities does your school offer? Do you participate in co-curricular activities? Working as a class, discuss the value of co-curricular activities. In what other ways does your school build connectedness?

- Sarah Hewat: So can we quickly identify right foot, put your hand on your right foot. Keith Perry: Deb rehearsal day first one, kids are excited, nervous, confused cause they don’t know their left foot from their right foot.

Announcer: Ladies and gentlemen I introduce to you the Kambrya College debutante ball set for 2015. The debutante ball is the major social event of Year 11 at Kambrya College.

Why does Kambrya value the Deb Ball? What do you think are the value of year level events? What do you think are the value of whole school events?
Episode 4 - Professional Learning

Episode 4 provides opportunities for educators to engage in professional conversations linked to the following focus areas of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). Focus areas are noted in italics at the end of discussion points.

Discussion points

Clinical Teaching and the Visible Classroom

Kambrya’s ambition to revolutionise its teaching continues with the help of Professor John Hattie and Associate Professor Janet Clinton from the Melbourne Graduate School of Education. The school is trialling a new tool for analysing teachers’ performance in the classroom. The tool provides students with a script of what teachers are saying, allowing them to see (and re-see) the teacher’s messages, instructions and stories as the lesson goes along. It is part of a program called the Visible Classroom. The forensic analysis of what goes on in the classroom helps determine what works and what doesn’t. Professor Hattie explains,

‘The data we measure is exactly the amount of time a teacher talks, the nature of questions, the student questions, we look at about thirty different factors about what makes a difference to the quality of learning.’

• Debbie Blee: Now we’re going to be doing something a little bit different today. As I am talking there is going to be captioning which means everything I say is going to be typed out by someone. Then you will literally see up on the screen everything I say. How does the captioning tool support student learning? How does the captioning tool improve teacher performance?

• Professor John Hattie: When you ask teachers how often do they talk in a class most of them say thirty, forty percent of the time. Well actually they talk eight to ninety percent in many classes and realising that is pretty powerful. But you don’t realise it until you actually have the evidence. Why does Professor Hattie believe it is important to reduce ‘teacher talk’?

• Professor John Hattie: Diagnose, intervene, evaluate,
that's the core of Clinical Teaching.
What is Clinical Teaching?
What does Mrs Blee learn about her teaching and about her students’ learning by adopting a Clinical Teaching approach? How does Clinical Teaching change Mrs Blee’s teaching style? How does the foot-age of Mrs Blee’s class before, during and after the testing support the rationale of Clinical Teaching?

APST: 1.2 Understand how students learn
APST: 3.3 Use teaching strategies
APST: 3.5 Use effective classroom communication
APST: 3.6 Evaluate and improve teaching programs
APST: 6.4 Apply professional learning and improve student learning
APST: 7.4 Engage with professional teaching networks and broader communities

Leadership

Most schools have a student leadership program. Students in leadership roles have the opportunity to make decisions, take on responsibility and have an input into the direction of the school.

Kambrya College provides positions for students to take on leadership roles across the school. Term 4 means that it is time to choose Kambrya’s student leaders for 2016.

Before the school votes for school captain, the sub-school leader must be chosen. Chelsea is Mirrim Sub-school Captain. She is keen to continue in the role in 2016 and has aspirations to be school captain. Michael is an unexpected contender for the position. His school record may not be as unblemished as Chelsea’s but he has emerged from Darrabi with the determination to live out the school motto.

- Chelsea: I gained the role in Year 9 and that’s especially rare because the role’s only meant for year tens.
- Michael: It is like going for president and having to go against Barak Obama again.
- Why is Chelsea the clear favourite in the race for sub-school captain? What does Michael’s decision to take on such a formidable opponent suggest about the type of student and person he has become during his time at Kambrya College?
- Why does Chelsea want the role? Why does Michael want the role?
- Why is it difficult for Mrs Wastle and Mr McDonald to choose between the candidates? Why do you think they choose Michael over Chelsea? Is Michael surprised by the decision? How does his behaviour confirm he is the right student for the role?

Rachel: Good morning to teachers and students who have taken the time out today to listen to my self and my fellow students who are also applying for the role of school captain for 2016. Before I start I would just like to say I would be honoured to be part of the leadership team next year that would be involved in bettering the school for all of you and be open to suggestions from the rest of you.

Lauren: Ever since I was at my old school my goal was to become school captain. And seeing as I want to join the air force in future becoming a school captain will make me look more appealing.

- Why does Rachel want to be school captain?
- Rachel’s rival is Lauren, another of Kambrya’s high achievers.
- Why does Lauren want to be school captain?
- Does the rivalry for the position bring out the best in the candidates?
- Rachel: I’m school captain for next year. Yeah I’m really excited. I love this school. And even if I didn’t become school captain I think I’d find another way to do what I love. It means a great deal.
- How does this comment confirm Rachel is a worthy student for the role?
Pathways

As the school year draws to an end, course direction interviews provide Year 10 students with a chance to review their progress and map out their final years of secondary school. Tiarne meets with Mrs Wastle and Mr Perry.

- Keith Perry: So the next couple of minutes I am actually going to go through your report and I am going to be frank and honest with you all right. I am not going to be mean, but I am going to be frank and honest with you about this okay? Because it’s important that you understand what it looks like on paper. Now what do you think I found with yours?
  Tiarne: I don’t know. I never really went to school so.
  What is the outcome of Tiarne’s course direction interview?

Statistically, the number of years spent in high school has a greater impact on a student’s future than the academic standard reached. In Revolution School, Professor Hattie acknowledges the stark reality of dropping out,

‘Leaving school early does dramatically effect what happens to you in terms of your health, wealth and happiness in later life. It’s kind of amazing that ninety-seven percent of adults in prison in Victoria did not finish high school.’

Tiarne wants to continue her education at Kambrya College but she is at risk of failing year 10 due to incomplete coursework.

- Jo Wastle: A school has flexibility and in fact not only flexibility but responsibility to make sure that they do offer opportunities to students to do, you know to demonstrate where they are at academically. Why do Mrs Wastle and Mr Wilson decide to modify Tiarne’s assessment tasks? How does this decision provide Tiarne with an experience of success?
  Tiarne: I know I am so young to leave school, like I am only sixteen but my Mum said it was either get a full time job, TAFE or school and I have chosen to get a full time job because I know I will enjoy that better.
  Having submitted her coursework and completed Year 10, Tiarne makes the decision to leave school. Is Tiarne’s decision a courageous one?
  What challenges do you think she will face in moving into full time employment?

After thirteen years of school the final exams are about to begin for Year 12. The results have the potential to shape lives and careers. Tausif will need to score in the top one percent of the state to achieve his dream but throughout the year he has struggled to avoid distractions. His trial exams did not go well, particularly Mathematical Methods which is a pre-requisite for his course.

- What is an ATAR? How does it determine a student’s post-secondary school pathway?
  Tausif: I am hoping to get into a medicine course. I can, like, become a specialist in throat surgery. What do you hope to do when you leave school?

Like Tausif, does your post-secondary pathway depend on your end-of-year-examination results?

Tausif’s ATAR is not high enough for him to gain entry into a medicine course. He decides to take another pathway and study Engineering at RMIT.

- Tausif: I am doing engineering at RMIT. I got a scholarship as well from them.
- Sarah Hewat: Hey, there we go. Who knew?
- Tausif: Yeah. It’s like one of the best feelings I could ever experience. And this year I’ll actually study.
- Sarah Hewat: No way. That’s awesome.

Reputation

The survey commissioned for Revolution School reveals most Australians believe academic results are better at private schools. Each year Kambrya loses a significant number of its students to selective and private schools nearby. Kambrya’s future relies on maintaining, or growing its student numbers as Mr Muscat explains,

‘When we lose enrolments our budget decreases and that means that we can’t retain the same number of teachers, the same number of programs, because we’re funded on a per student basis.’

- Professor John Hattie: If you take two students of the same kind of prior ability, the same kind of initial ability, here in Australia it virtually does not matter what school you go to, schools don’t make much difference: it’s the teachers. Hold a class forum to discuss the issue of public versus private education. Every student in the class is expected to share a point of view. Invite staff members to contribute their expert opinions.
- Professor John Hattie: It’s really challenging for Michael Muscat to compete with rival schools, because all the message is: that it’s a government school, it takes on kids that are not so good, that outcomes aren’t so high and that makes it really, really tough to try and convince parents that this is the school to come to.

Michael Muscat: Reputation and word of mouth can be very powerful and unfortunately the school has suffered a little bit from some poor perceptions that have lingered on from years gone by and I’m talking between eight and ten years ago.

How is Kambrya College endeavouring to change community perceptions and improve the school’s reputation?

APST: 1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students
APST: 4.1 Support student participation
APST: 5.1 Assess student learning
APST: 5.2 Provide feedback to students on their learning
Has the revolution succeeded?

Professor John Hattie: When I look at Kambrya’s achievements the major message we should take home is that relentless focus on the quality of teaching can truly make a difference to the lives of students and that can happen in any school in the nation.

Kambrya College now ranks as one of the most improved schools in Victoria. The evidence shows that the school has revolutionised itself.

Use the Appendix 2: School report to write an end-of-year report on Kambrya College’s achievements.

- Jo Wastle: It just goes on and on and on. It never ends and we just keep building on the foundations of the year before. We just get stronger and stronger every year. And that’s because what was hard five years ago is not hard any more. What was hard this year won’t be hard next year. There’ll be other hard things next year but they won’t be hard the following year.

What does Mrs Wastle’s claim suggest about Kambrya College’s understanding of success?

How does Mrs Wastle’s claim endorse the school’s motto: ‘Maximising the potential of each student’?

• How is this technique improving learning and teaching at Kambrya College?
• Does your school use this technique?
• Do you think your school should adopt this technique?

At Kambrya College, teachers write the learning goals and success criteria on the whiteboard at the start of each lesson. Students make a record of the learning goals and success criteria.

• APST: 3.6 Evaluate and improve teaching programs
• APST: 5.4 Interpret student data
• APST: 6.2 Engage in professional learning and improve practice
• APST: 6.3 Engage with colleagues and improve practice
• APST: 7.4 Engage with professional teaching networks and broader communities

Learning goals and success criteria

Grace Wong: Our learning goals.

Martin McDonald: Very basic, simple learning goals.

Sarah Hewat: Books open, date, topic, learning goals, success criteria, go.

Majidah: Goals. It’s nice to go into a class and know what I need to get done.

Assessment for and as learning requires that students and teachers share a common understanding of what is being learned. The learning is articulated in student-friendly language as a learning goal. Learning goals can be applied to a lesson, a series of lessons, a term, a unit of work, etc. Learning can be expressed in terms of knowledge (know); understanding (understand); and skills (do). Learning goals ensure that teachers and students know what they are trying to achieve in each class.

Success criteria describe in specific terms what successful achievement of the learning goal looks like. They help students recognise if they have been successful in their learning.

At Kambrya College, teachers write the learning goals and success criteria on the whiteboard at the start of each lesson. Students make a record of the learning goals and success criteria.

• APST: 3.1 Establish challenging learning goals
• APST: 3.2 Plan, structure and sequence learning programs
• APST: 3.3 Use teaching strategies
• APST: 5.1 Assess student learning
• APST: 5.2 Provide feedback to students on their learning
What do you think it takes to be a teacher?
Is teaching more than a job?
Why is teaching referred to as the noblest of professions?
Professor John Hattie: It’s the teacher that walks into a classroom and says my job here today is to understand my impact. Those are the ones that make the difference. Who are constantly monitoring what they are doing, whether it is working, who it is working on. Are they getting that sufficient change? Those are the teachers that make the difference.
How do the teachers featured in Revolution School make a difference?
Grace Wong: Being a teacher is my dream job; you get to meet lots of students. Like, you’ve been given, like, twenty plus kids in a classroom but as a first year teacher it’s a challenge for me.
Peter Wallis: Every single day is going to be different. One strategy works for one class won’t necessarily work for another group of students. Which is a challenge but it’s one of the things I really love about teaching.
Keith Perry: I like to let the kids see me you know in a bit of a lighter light. I am a bit of a dag. I got a hopeless sense of humour and you know don’t take myself too seriously all the time as well so. I think it’s important that the kids see that, that you’re human. I’m strict, yep. I am direct, yep. But I would like to think that the kids see me as someone who will support them by basically telling them how it is.
I am not going to shirk away from that. Otherwise I am doing them a disservice.
Marty McDonald: The reason I became a teacher I guess the satisfaction of helping. I grew up in a big family and we were all fairly supportive of one another and I sort of wanted to pass that on to help other, other people learn and succeed and have the life that they want to have.
Debbie Blee: There is always room for improvement. Anything in life can be improved. You know you can be a good teacher but you can always be a better teacher.
What do these claims tell the audience of Revolution School about what it takes to be a teacher?
How does Revolution School portray teaching?
Michael Muscat: By the time we get to the end of our long and challenging year, the teachers are well, they’re very tired.
Debbie Blee: As a new teacher I had a lot of energy, a lot of enthusiasm, I probably thought I could change the world a bit. And I still do to a point but I am much more realistic now as an older, ‘older’ teacher.
Professor John Hattie: Too many young teachers leave the profession, about half leave within the first five years. Too many more experienced teachers start to cruise along. It’s a real problem.
Twenty-five percent of Australian teachers report emotional exhaustion and burnout, often only a few years into the job.
Are these the only reasons why many Australian teachers choose to leave the profession?
Why is it important to improve teacher retention rates? How can teacher retention rates be improved and whose responsibility is it to ensure teachers do not leave the profession?
As Revolution School has shown teachers can have an incredible impact on the lives of their students. Need convincing? Google ‘inspirational teacher movies’ and see what happens.
Your task is to write an expository essay about a teacher that has made a difference in your life or in the life of someone you know well.
Sarah Hewat: I was here as a student teacher and then as a graduate teacher, and while I might have had plans to do other big things in other places the vibe in this school just kept me here. It’s just the place where people can be themselves and be heard and respected. That’s why I’ll probably never leave.
Keith Perry: I started at Kambrya College in 2005, and it has been my only school that I have operated in. Hence I feel such a close connection with it; I spend half my life here you know, literally.
Keith Perry: The thing that I think makes our school different from a lot of other schools, is that we are just relentless in our pursuit of improvement, and that’s really what I love about working here.
What do Sarah Hewat and Keith Perry’s claims suggest about schools as workplaces?
Interview a staff member about their decision to work at your school. Write a profile that could be published in the school newsletter or on the school website.
Making Revolution School

Revolution School is an observational documentary series filmed over the course of a school year. The four episodes provide an insight into each of the four terms of a school year.

- Revolution School is an observational documentary series. What is an observational documentary? Have you watched other observational documentaries that are similar to Revolution School? Spend time as a class, discussing other examples of this genre. What are the features of an observational documentary? Make a two-column chart. In the first column list the features you have named. In the second column use the content of Revolution School to provide an example of each feature. Do you think Revolution School is an exemplar of all that an observational documentary series can be?
- What expectations does the opening title sequence create? How are you positioned as a viewer? Why do you think the filmmakers decided to conclude the series with the beginning of the 2016 school year?
- The filmmakers used fixed rig and roving cameras. There were cameras in classrooms, offices, school corridors and the schoolyard showing both students and staff at work and play. Do you think the presence of the production team and the cameras influenced the behaviour of staff and students? Were you surprised by the willingness of the staff and students to be filmed? Would you like your day at school filmed? Suggested activity: Make a video diary about your day at school. Your video diary should only feature you and should provide an insight into your day at school.
- What strategies do the filmmakers use to allow us to connect with the students and staff of Kambrya College?
- Working as a class, make a list of the likely challenges of making Revolution School.

Investigation

Putting Australia’s education system to the test

‘Australia’s education system is falling behind. Fifteen years ago our schools were ranked sixth in the world but now we’re struggling to make the top twenty. We’re letting down our children and the nation.’ – Revolution School

- Why is education important? Working as a class, mind map your answer to this question. Drawing on your answers, devise a school-based campaign to educate the school community about education.
- What role does education play in the development of a country?
- What do you think Professor Hattie means when he claims that ‘complacency is killing education in Australia’?
- Why should Australia value education?

Your task is to research and prepare a multimedia report on the state of Australian education.

A. Your report should provide information about the following aspects:
   - Literacy standards
   - Numeracy standards
   - Equity and inclusion in education
   - Quality education

B. Your report should provide facts and figures about Australia’s global education ranking.

C. Your report should provide an evaluation of whether or not Australia is a ‘clever country’.

D. Your report should offer three recommendations about how Australia can improve its global education ranking.

Links

- Clinical teaching is at the core of the work being done in successful schools around the country, and internationally. It is also the foundation for the Masters Teaching program at the University of Melbourne’s Graduate School of Education. http://education.unimelb.edu.au/about_us/clinical_teaching
- Professor John Hattie’s book, Visible Learning, brings together twenty years of evidence-based research into what is proven to work in schools to improve learning. http://visiblelearningplus.com
- Dr Bill Rogers, education consultant and Honorary Fellow, Melbourne Graduate School of Education is considered one of the world’s foremost experts on behaviour management in the classroom. http://www.billrogers.com.au
- Professor Lea Waters, Director of the Centre for Positive Psychology, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, is registered psychologist. http://www.leawaters.com/
- Di Snowball, Literacy consultant is an Australian and internationally recognised expert in the teaching of reading http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/support/Pages/wssnowball.aspx
Use the viewing chart to make notes about each episode of *Revolution School*.

- In the column labelled ‘Students’, write about the individual students featured in the episode.
- In the column labelled ‘Staff’, write about the teaching staff and leadership team featured in the episode.
- In the column labelled ‘Learning’, write about the lessons and the teaching practices featured in the episode.
- In the column labelled ‘Wellbeing’, write about the student wellbeing issues and the strategies employed to improve student wellbeing featured in the episode.
- In the row labelled ‘Expert opinion’, write about the educational experts and their advice.
- In the row labelled ‘Achievements’, write about student and staff successes and school improvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENTS</th>
<th>STAFF</th>
<th>LEARNING</th>
<th>WELLBEING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPERT OPINION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACHIEVEMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### INTERIM REPORT FOR KAMBRYA COLLEGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Achievement level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## TERM: 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Achievement level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## TERM: 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Achievement level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## TERM: 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Achievement level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## TERM: 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Achievement level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>