

# The VEA Framework for Transformative School Leadership

*VEA meaning: To be inter-independent; To be unique; To be followed.*

## The VEA Framework for Transformative School Leadership

In the dynamic landscape of education, where the metrics of success are constantly evolving, school leadership demands more than incremental improvement; it requires a transformative engine. This engine is the VEA Framework. VEA stands for Vision, Efficacy, and Action three interdependent drivers that, together, propel a school community from aspiration to unparalleled impact. The name itself encapsulates our highest aspiration to be exquisitely unique and attractive to those that love something new. It is the pursuit of being different yet not isolated—a school that confidently defines its own path and becomes a beacon for its community.

The acronym is a declaration of our purpose. V is for the Vision a community crafts, its unique North Star of equity and potential. E is for the collective Efficacy, the unwavering belief that we can and we will bring that vision to life. A is for the Action we take, the daily translation of belief into practice. As Professor John Hattie asserts, "The greatest effects on student learning occur when teachers become learners of their own teaching." This powerful shift is only possible in a culture of high efficacy, where a shared vision fuels agency.

Critically, VEA is not a prescriptive program but a responsive framework that acknowledges that each school's expression of VEA is unique, built upon its distinct context and strengths. This aligns with contemporary thought on system change, which emphasises that success is not about compliance, but as Andy Hargreaves states "building a culture of capacity and internal accountability". VEA provides the structure for this culture to flourish, creating the conditions for shared commitment to become tangible, transformative Action.

Together, this framework creates a virtuous cycle: a clear Vision builds collective Efficacy, which in turn fuels purposeful Action, and that Action, in its success, refines and reinforces the Vision itself. VEA is the core driver of a truly future-ready school, one that is not only successful but exquisitely unique and dynamic centre of learning.

## Framework

Collectively school can engage in synodal in listening and dialogue with all stakeholders to, explore and challenge old assumptions about what schooling is and can be, who and what it is for, and hope to create a new education paradigm for their unique context. Their story must and will be one of transformation.

Three key areas can assist to facilitate the transformation of your school. The interconnected areas require us to think differently; **Vision** - our purpose, values and priorities; **Efficacy** - expanding who has voice and agency within our community; and **Action** - unlocking the transformative potential. These areas will encourage driving questions that will challenge stakeholders to act in new ways, with a greater focus on the wider ecosystem.

This is an invitation to all your stakeholders including staff, students and parents to ask big questions, to think differently about both: "**What is our purpose?**" and "**How we will get there.**" I hope this will act as a provocation for conversation and action.

# The What .....

## Vision

Re-imaging your vision to reflect your purpose, values and priorities for the future challenges and opportunities ahead.

## Efficacy

Proactively engage voice and agency by investing in all stakeholders so they can flourish and make confident decisions about learning and our school

## Action

Unlock innovation by enabling staff to co-create and co-evolve learning innovations to transform the next iteration

# The How .....

## Vision

Engage all stakeholders in defining their purpose at our school

Reveal and challenge the shared assumptions blocking transformation

Discover and connect - locally & globally - to engage new alliances/partnerships

## Efficacy

Proactively engage self and collective efficacy of staff and learners

Enable a wide range of stakeholders to take part in the teaming process

Make data and information more accessible, useful and interesting to stakeholders

## Action

Integrate new metrics into our community to stimulate, assess and recognise learning

Strengthen the link between metacognition and real-world learning

Make learning more learner centred

# Vision

## **Re-imagine our Vision and Purpose**

Re-imaging your vision to reflect your purpose, values and priorities for the future challenges and opportunities ahead.

Engage all stakeholders in defining their purpose of schooling

Reveal and challenge the shared assumptions blocking transformation

Discover, connect – locally and globally – to engage new alliances/partnerships

## The Why .....

If your school is to truly transform – a new vision - new purpose - needs to be co-constructed by your stakeholders.

To change the unique purpose of schooling means challenging the collective assumptions that inform and reinforce the current purpose and develop new assumptions that do the same for the new purpose.

Your schools is held together by a vast array of collective assumptions. To challenge collective assumptions requires first to reveal them, then to question their legitimacy and challenge their power.

For example, the collective assumption that only NCCD students should have a personalised plan, or schooling is lineal and should be based on age rather than ability. These are just some of many myths that persist in education. Other assumptions are that our school location is an insurmountable barrier to learning, or that some LGAs have better cultures for learning than others - are equally false.

However, myths and assumptions like this have to be challenged because they underpin and justify a whole set of arrangements in educational systems - standardised testing (NAPLAN, MAI & HSC), 'ability' groupings, timetabling and the subject choices available to students. These are the foundations that build walls of inequity.

To be at the frontier of learning and to challenge these inequities, your school needs to create networks of disruptors, who are willing to ask the big questions and be comfortable in co-creating a future state. At times we will have local engagement, however, it is our desire to build alliances on a global level.

The development of alliances and partnerships is exciting with the emergence of new technologies and pathways that are attracting the attention of early adopters. Your school will already have reciprocal relationships which could change your thinking on metacognition and how our students learn best. Whilst real-world partners are changing the concept of school-based pathways and the lineal approach to learning, with VET, university, work placement, traineeships and micro-credentialing viable options for students.

# Efficacy

## Proactively engage voice and agency

Proactively engage voice and agency by investing in all stakeholders so they can flourish and make confident decisions about learning and your school

Proactively engage self and collective efficacy of staff and learners

Support a wide range of stakeholders to take part in the teaming process

Make data and information more accessible, useful and interesting to stakeholders

## The Why .....

As leaders, we need to recognise the value of soliciting voice from your stakeholders. Staff, students and parents feel empowered when they are seen, heard, and able to contribute to and understand the decision-making process. It is imperative that we liberate our stakeholders so that they can flourish within our community of learners.

Reaching consensus on goals not only increases collective efficacy, it also has a direct and measurable impact on student achievement. Goals should be built by and understood by teams and individuals responsible for them. When teams start with ownership, their ability to operate in norms and willingness to listen and co-create with one another increases.

Technology is one source that has provided learners and staff with greater autonomy and agency to take charge of their learning to conceptually explore and enact new ideas and experiences. Learning that connects to the real-world with learners' interests and passions is engaging and motivating, with implications for achievement within our current environment.

Collective efficacy is at the heart of processes to transform learning and education. Teaming is a verb. It is largely determined by the mindset and practices of teamwork. Teaming is

teamwork on the fly. It involves coordinating and collaborating without the benefit of a stable team structure. Staff voice and agency matters, because it provided the greatest opportunity to empower staff to influence transformation.

Learning is a life-long endeavour. Technology has shattered the illusion that schools and universities were the only places where learning happens, but it took technology to break the monopoly on access to learning expertise and resources.

Schools and staff scrambled to utilise learning management systems, digital technology and learning resources and tasks are now universally available, engaging and purposeful.

With new and different people involved in learning design and decision making, new and different structures and tools are also required, which enables learners and parents to share their ideas, views and experiences as part of a broader, more inclusive collaboration about education transformation.

# Action

## Unlock innovation

Unlock innovation by enabling staff to co-create and co-evolve learning innovations to transform the next iteration

Integrate new metrics into our community to stimulate, assess and recognise learning

Strengthen the link between metacognition and real-world learning

Make more learning more learner centred

## The Why .....

When the student and teacher is at the centre of their learning, it is their strengths, needs, curiosity, passions and interests that become the focus for transformation.

This vision for learner-centredness goes beyond traditional practices of differentiation or personalisation. It both empowers ambitious and creative educators to make their practice more inquiry focused and learner-centred in ways that are rewarding for learners and educators, and it challenges processes to serve the needs of all learners.

Learner-centredness is disruptive and has the potential to be transformative because it turns the standardised model of schooling on its head, while also challenges the assumptions that sit at the heart of education systems and shines a light on the inequality that is embedded into them.

External assessment and accreditation are high leverage points because they disproportionately affect the learning opportunities that are available to young people in school. In a 'teaching to the test' curricula learning can quickly become unbalanced as

externally examined subjects take precedence in timetables and private study, particularly where these feature as indicators on which a school's performance is judged.

Since external assessment and accreditation are powerful drivers in schools, they are also a force that can be harnessed to ensure that they drive the school in the 'right' direction; serving the purposes of learning and education determined by stakeholders.

New metrics need to be developed with real-world and industry experts, that result in a more comprehensive portfolios for students that evidence both development of competencies over time, micro-credentials and diverse knowledge and skills.

We must look beyond the 'standardised tests' to evaluate, evidence and benchmark a wider range of skills: collaboration, critical thinking, creative thinking, culture, connectivity and communication. By integrating a wider range of assessments and ways to recognise learning into the learning process, assessment and accreditation can be used to help close equity gaps and to accelerate transformation.

Supporting educators to learn how students learn best – metacognition – allows staff to utilise the art and science of learning to the design of new inquiry focused learning opportunities which provide insights into how young people learn, develop, grow, and master complex skills.

The science of learning builds upon: choice theory, self-determination theory, cognitive psychology, neuroscience, brain research and positive psychology and offers new opportunities for transforming learning and your College.