



Annual Report

2017

Legal Entity Name - Advance College of Education Inc.

Incorporation Number - A0095946S

School Number - 2901

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CONTENTS

School Overview	3
Mission	3
Vision	3
Values	3
Aims	4
Governance	4
President’s Report	4
School Year in Review	5
Curriculum	7
Teaching and Learning Report	7
Student Reporting	9
Teaching and Learning Direction in 2018	9
Student Report	10
Transition Report	11
Staff Report	11
Professional Development	12
Financial Statements	12

School Overview

Advance College has three campuses across the Mornington Peninsula - Hastings, Mornington and Rosebud. It has specialist teachers, learning support assistants and well-being staff to deliver the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) at three levels - Foundation, Intermediate and Senior.

Our college community is made up of many groups including students, parents, guardians, friends, staff, college council/committee, local community organisations and the general public. Advance College has a strong focus on its community as it ensures that our students are provided with the best and most relevant education possible. It provides an alternative, education setting to mainstream school, with a strong emphasis on supporting students in pathways to employment or further education and training.

Our VCAL is presented in a positive education framework which assists teaching staff to meet the specific needs of disengaged young people in their pursuit of positive achievements in education. It is specifically designed to improve our capacity to address engagement so that young people can achieve their personal and social potential through educational achievement. It is a whole-school approach that meets the developmental strengths and needs of students, teachers, and leaders.

Mission

Advance College assists young people to gain the best educational outcome possible through quality and inclusive teaching and learning practices.

Vision

To be a recognised, independent, specialist school that provides high quality, innovative learning and development opportunities that positively impact on local communities.

To provide a challenging, engaging and non-judgemental learning environment, supported by shared community partnerships that enable each individual student to achieve successful educational and social outcomes and maximise their vocational potential.

Values

Advance College values:

- Respect
- Diversity
- Engagement
- Inspiring learning
- Equity
- Belonging
- Individuality
- Community contribution

Aims

Advance College is focussed on supporting and actively promoting the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- The elected government
- The rule of law
- Equal rights for all before the law
- Freedom of religion
- Freedom of speech and association
- The values of openness & tolerance

Advance College aims to provide a balanced education to all students who attend by:

- being a recognised, independent, specialist school that provides high quality, innovative learning and development opportunities that positively impact on local communities; and
- providing a challenging, engaging and non-judgmental learning environment, supported by shared community partnerships that enable each individual student to achieve successful educational and social outcomes and maximise their vocational potential.

Governance

Advance College is an independent, specialist school registered with the Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (VRQA). It is an incorporated association and a registered charity. It has a Committee of Management (also known as the College Board or School Council) as its governing body and is primarily responsible for the strategic direction of the school and the appointment of the Principal. The day to day operation of the school is delegated to the Principal.

Committee members for 2017 were:

- Carol Smith (President)
- Arthur Walmsley (Treasurer)
- Lyn Treloar (Secretary)
- Bryan Ridgeway
- Andrew Joseph
- Steve Wright (Principal)

President's Report

Advance College began as an independent specialist school in August 2016. It was established as a result of an identified need for an alternative educational pathway for young people who were struggling with their education.

This year, our first full year of operating, has presented a range of both challenges and opportunities. From the Committee's perspective our College occupies a unique position in the Community as the only non-mainstream school on the Mornington Peninsula.

It provides a viable, educational alternative and a 'safety net' for students who may be at risk of not completing their education. A key to this alternative education is an emphasis on students completing their secondary education with a strong focus on vocational rather than academic outcomes.

Our College is focused on helping young people who, for a variety of reasons, have found it difficult to succeed in mainstream schools. We offer students a flexible environment where they can complete their education while getting the extra support they need to reach their future career potential.

As President of the School Committee it is gratifying to see our students be engaged and, in many cases, re-engaged in an education program that meets their individual needs. This engagement has been strongly supported by the adoption of the Berry Street Education Model which has made a significant difference to the way our College teaches and how our students learn.

One of the main areas of focus for the Committee is to continue to review and develop the College's Strategic Plan. As the College grows the Strategic Plan underpins this growth and will ensure we are optimally positioned to give our students the best educational outcomes possible.

I would like to thank our Committee and Staff for their dedication and commitment to supporting the College and, in particular, our students. I look forward to 2018 as a consolidating year where the College grows and further establishes its reputation as a quality alternative educational option.

School Year in Review

Our students should be very proud of themselves as they have done really well throughout the year. Their participation and commitment in all of the curriculum areas was a credit to them. I would also like to thank our wonderful teaching team. They have taken on a range of challenges and have worked tirelessly to support our students both academically and with their wellbeing.

Some of the highlights of the year include the annual camp in Melbourne, a range of local excursions, the music and art programs and a range of activities supporting our local community.

One significant change to our College was, at the start of the year, the introduction the Berry Street Education Model. All staff attended a four day program on how the Model works and how to implement it to our students. It is a continuous process of development and has been embraced by staff very positively. This has been a major catalyst for student engagement, positive behaviour, and student/staff support.

Another major highlight was our student graduation celebration. Held at the Hastings Campus it was attended by more than 120 students, family members and friends. The event was enhanced by our 'College band' - five students who presented three items and, apart from some minor technical issues, acquitted themselves admirably.

VCAL Health and Wellbeing Day

On Monday 23rd of October we held the Advance VCAL Health and Wellbeing Day, an event supported by the partnership with Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Services (MPYS).

There were several topics delivered by guest speakers throughout the day which included alcohol and drug harm minimisation (Peninsula Health), sexual health, diversity/LGBTQI and 'Life Choices'.

We also had two activities facilitated by trained staff which included a therapeutic African drumming workshop as well as guided mindfulness, both promoting positive mental health.

Due to receiving fantastic feedback from the students, staff and guest speakers, we will ensure this becomes an annual event!

Students participated in a range of community initiatives throughout Term 3. The following are highlights as told by the students themselves:

Moonlight Sanctuary



We visited Moonlight Sanctuary on Thursday 24th of August with our VCAL class. We spent the morning walking along the track that runs through the park and we were able to hand feed the wallabies, who had the softest fur and many had joeys in their pouches.

We went to the Dingo keeper talk and learned that the Dingos are very fussy about what they eat and have very sensitive hearing. The second keeper talk we went to was for the Tasmanian Devils, where we watched the devils get fed chopped up mice. It was a great experience visiting Moonlight Sanctuary and learning about different native wildlife and conservation in a real life environment.

Foundation VCAL Student - Advance College Mornington

Corowa Court

On Wednesdays my class goes to Corowa Court aged care facility in Mornington. We usually spend about an hour with the residents, getting to know them, playing games and teaching them new things.



The first time I went our group taught some residents how to play Uno, on other visits we have taught them how to play card games such as PIG and also Scatergories.

Recently we have been creating trivia quizzes for the residents.

I have really enjoyed this PDS project because I get to spend time with members of my community and do things that I usually wouldn't do, like running trivia and public speaking.

I look forward to continuing with this project next term.

Senior VCAL Student - Advance College Mornington

Wheel Talk

Wheel talk was on the 2nd of August and it was an excursion which all 3 advance campus' attended, all the students were split into 2 groups one did lawn bowls and the other did wheelchair basketball. Personally I thought basketball was great I really enjoyed it and I could have done it all day if my hands didn't hurt. I understand how hard it is to live with a disability in our society and wheel talk really expressed the mental strength that people have when their life is changed by a disability.




Intermediate VCAL Student - Advance College Mornington

Disco Fundraiser

As part of our Personal Development Skills learning five students from Advance College Rosebud organised a disco at Eastbourne Primary School. We had raffles, dance competitions and sold food and drinks in order to raise money. We were overwhelmed with the success of the night in which

around 200 children attended. The event was to raise money for the Southern Peninsula Community Support and Information Centre. SPCSIC provides support to marginalised individuals and families who are experiencing disadvantage within the community. We were stoked to have raised \$671 on the night.

Intermediate VCAL Student - Advance College Rosebud

 SBAT's@ Advance College

Certificate II in Park and Gardens is a great SBAT (School Based Apprenticeship & Traineeship) program that is offered at Mornington Advance campus. During this program you will gain lots of experience and knowledge about many different fields such as arboriculture, horticulture, turf management and many, many more great opportunities.

This course is very useful if you are looking to get a career in landscaping/horticulture. Even if you're not looking for a job in this industry you will learn something new and exciting.

Intermediate VCAL Student - Advance College Rosebud

Curriculum

VCAL has five curriculum streams:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Personal Development skills
- Work Related Skills
- Industry Related Skills

Each of these streams is integrated into student-centred Projects that are completed throughout the year. The Project planning process is continually refined with a template developed to ensure expectations, teaching strategies, practice activities and assessment tasks (including evidence requirements) are clearly articulated and mapped against learning outcomes.

Students undertake multiple projects in three week blocks to promote increased engagement and enthusiasm for each subject. This also ensures outcomes from all VCAL curriculum streams are covered on multiple occasions which enables students to demonstrate competence in a variety of ways.

Throughout the Projects there is a strong emphasis on preparation for work including participation, by all students, in work experience and vocational education and training (VET) programs. Individual Education Plans are developed for all students. Each plan contains the student's profile, interests, strengths/achievements, areas for improvement, barriers to learning and long term/short term goals.

Teaching and Learning Report

Prepared by Kris Helisma

The vision for teaching and learning in 2017 was "Preparing Students to Learn." This reflects the updated school philosophy:

ACE believes that all students have the right to a quality, individualised education program that enables them to succeed and connect with the wider community.

ACE is committed to the creation of a learning environment which centres on improving wellbeing, stamina and resilience to strengthen educational, social and vocational outcomes for each student. Our programs are delivered with high expectations for academic achievement and personal and social development that broaden further education and/or employment options.

The conduit for this was the introduction of The Berry Street Education Model (BSEM). All teachers, Learning Support Assistants and school leaders completed intensive training in January of 2017 and other staff were provided with a snapshot to ensure that the whole organisation ‘talk the same talk and walk the same walk’.

The impact that the BSEM has had on student’s preparedness to learn has been significant.

Quantitatively this is reflected in:

- An overall score of 3.7 in relation to school engagement in the Six Star Student Wellbeing Survey (designed to gain an overall gauge of a student population or sub-groups of a student population in six specific areas of wellbeing.) A mean score between **3.5 and 3.99 is good**. It reflects important information on enjoyment, dedication, and relationships at school. For students, school engagement is a crucial component to wellbeing. Students with high levels of well-being are more motivated and display greater levels of engagement and academic achievement, compared to students with low wellbeing. Higher wellbeing is also associated with fewer mental, emotional, and behavioural concerns.
- Overall improvement in Literacy and Numeracy scores in ACER Compass testing (**Compass** is a computer based assessment of core literacy and numeracy skills specifically designed for disengaged and educationally marginalised young people and adults).
- A large decrease in unacceptable student behaviour. For example, a total of only 5 students for the year (across all sites) had to be placed on Level 3 (consistently not being ready to learn) of the school’s discipline system.
- A total of 40 students being awarded a VCAL qualification which is higher than previous years.

Qualitatively this is reflected in:

- Informal feedback from parents/guardians regarding their child’s willingness to attend school and more positive attitudes to learning.
- Greater willingness to attend leading to improved attendance and punctuality rates
- Increased positive interaction with staff and peers. E.g. saying good morning, engaging in conversation, laughter etc.
- Increased capacity to self-regulate, identify triggers and greater stamina/resilience.
- A positive atmosphere throughout the school.

We are continuing to refine how we utilise the BSEM this year including:

- Encouraging students to lead morning and afternoon circles.
- Ensuring lesson structure is safe, predictable and includes: explanation of what teacher wants students to achieve, maximum of 10 minutes explicit teaching instruction, regular brain breaks, practice activities and tasks. Every lesson should incorporate academic content and ‘psycho-education’ (self-education).

- Focus lessons integrating Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) curriculum with the BSEM domains.
- Ensuring new staff complete BSEM training as soon as practicable.

Student Reporting

A new reporting template was developed and utilised at the end of semester two which includes more comprehensive information on each student's learning habits (including organisation, collaboration, communication and personal learning) and progress towards meeting outcomes in the areas of literacy, numeracy, personal development and work related skills.

Teaching and Learning Direction in 2018

The vision for teaching and learning in 2018 is 'Teaching Students How to Learn'.

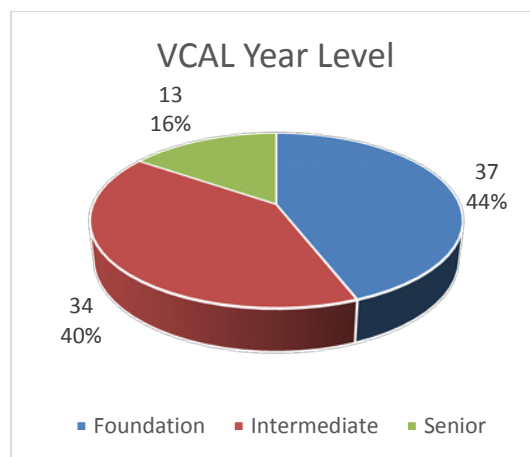
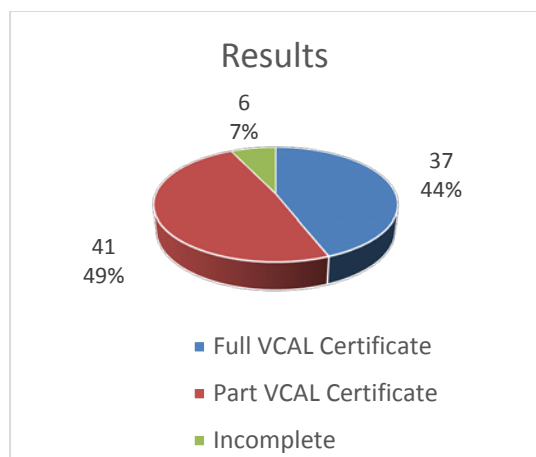
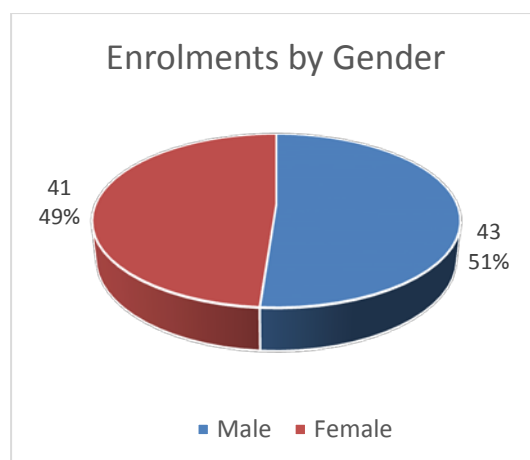
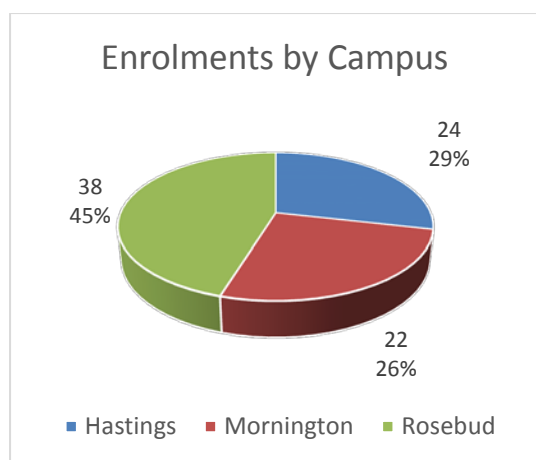
This includes the following elements:

- Project Planning process refined and new template developed to ensure expectations, teaching strategies, practice activities and assessment tasks (including evidence requirements) are clearly articulated and mapped against learning outcomes.
- Greater emphasis on preparation for work. This includes redevelopment of the work experience and VET programs.
- Assessment policy, process and procedure honed with a greater emphasis on informing students of assessment and evidence requirements and outcome mapping from the outset.
- Individual Education Plans currently being developed for all students. Each plan contains the student's profile, interests, strengths/achievements, areas for improvement, barriers to learning and long term/short term goals. Plans will be reviewed at the end of each semester or as required.
- Teaching students 'how to learn'. We are currently in the process of 'investigating' the renowned Feuerstein Method to enhance each student's capacity to move towards reaching their full potential. We feel that this complements the BSEM and may provide that 'missing element' that we have been searching for. There has been interest from a philanthropic organisation regarding financial support to implement the program.

*'The Feuerstein method teaches the vitally important - and often overlooked - skill of **learning how to learn**. This unique educational technique combines specially designed instruments and mediation in order to identify and enhance an individual's learning potential. As a result, the learner gains the knowledge and tools required to reach beyond their manifest abilities.'*

Student Report

Across the school year we had 84 students enrol. The College received funding for 66 students enrolled as at August 4, 2017 (the Census date for Independent Schools).



Overall student attendance rate was 78.2%. Student completion rates have been pleasing with 37 achieving their full VCAL certificate and 41 achieving a part Certificate or Statement of Attainment. Most of those who did not finish their VCAL certificate will have the opportunity to do so in 2018.

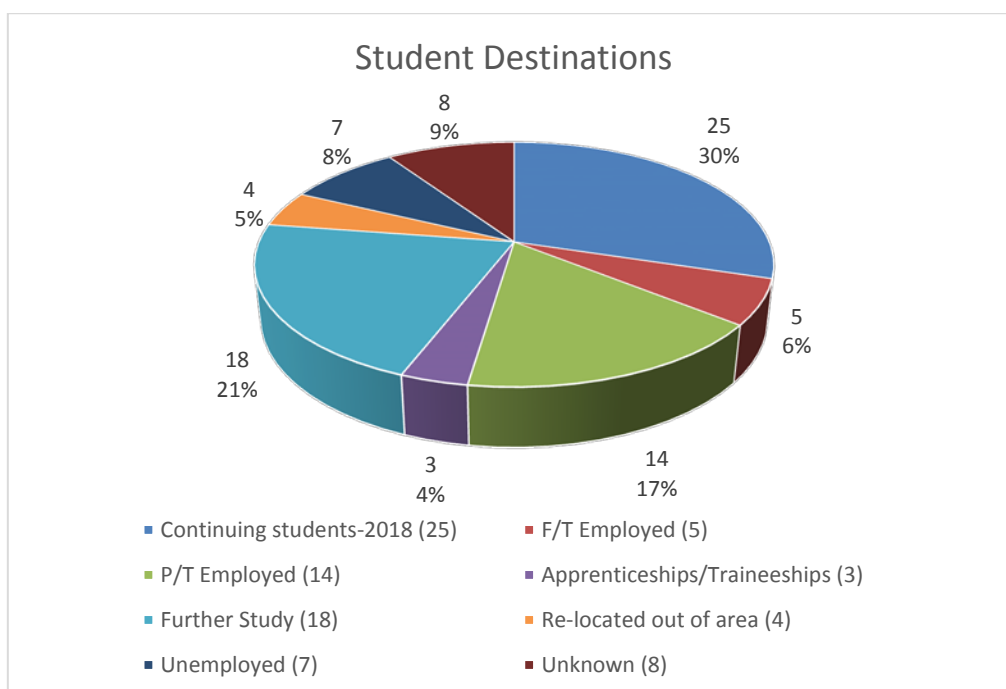
Our staff members are highly committed to supporting the individual learning needs of all of our students and achieving continuous improvement in student outcomes. All members of our school community are asked to take personal responsibility and accountability for learning outcomes. We recognise the importance of parents and carers as partners in all aspects of student learning. We have explicit, high-expectations of all learners and expect and recognise success. We highly value and focus on the Literacy and Numeracy needs of our students, believing these areas to be the building-blocks of success in all areas of schooling and throughout life.

Parent and community engagement - the involvement of parents in their child's education is encouraged at all times. School reports are issued to parents at the end of each semester. Parent-teacher interviews are conducted during Terms One and Three. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they wish to discuss their child's progress.

Transition Report

One of the key aims of Advance College is to prepare our students for employment and life after school. Students are supported to gain a successful, post-school outcome while in school and after they leave. Students are provided with on-going assistance to find employment, gain a tertiary placement or an apprenticeship or traineeship for as long as required.

In summary, of the 84 students across 2017, we had 40 students (48%) achieve an employment and/or further training outcome and 25 (30%) students continue their education with Advance College.



Staff Report

Staffing comprises:

- VCAL Learning Support Assistants (4)
- VCAL Teachers (3)
- VCAL Learning Support Co-ordinator
- VCAL Learning and Development Co-ordinator
- VCAL Learning Support Manager
- Finance Manager
- Assistant Principal
- Principal

The College also engages a consulting psychologist, on a part time basis, to support students and their families.

All teaching staff have current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).

Professional Development

A significant emphasis is placed on all staff undergoing Professional Development (PD). Two important resources for this have been Independent Schools of Victoria (ISV) and Berry Street Education Model (BSEM) training. ISV delivered PD across a range of areas including a 'Principalship' program for new Principals, Teacher and Well-being Staff Resilience, and Teaching and Learning. Supporting our College is our membership of ISV, BSEM Alumni, and the Victorian Teacher Learning Network.

Other PD included:

Resilience, Rights, Respectful Relationships (RRRR)

Student well-being and resilience

Family violence support respectful relationships

Duty of Care

Engaging Disengaged Students

Safe at Work (OH&S)

VCAL Validation, Moderation and Quality Assurance

Mental Health First Aid

Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD)

ChildSafe

Mandatory Reporting

Bridges Out of Poverty

Suicide Postvention

Financial Statements

See Appendix.