The Churchill Fellowship - Background

- Received award in November 2016
- Travelled and completed research October to December 2018
- Supported 7 weeks of funded travel through the USA and Canada
- Visited Secondary Schools, Colleges, Community Organisations and Government Agencies
Student engagement and retention – Why is this important?

The Mitchell Institute (2015) Senior School years: school completion uneven across Australia

- Less than 64% of students in inner regional and outer regional Australia achieve a Year 12 equivalency
- Socio-economic status is a key determinant of success
- Male students are 10% less likely to achieve a year 12 equivalency compared to female students
- Gippsland students are amongst some of the most disadvantaged in Victoria

ABS (2011) shows that Year 12 attainment is “regarded as a key factor in the formal development of an individual’s skills and knowledge….which contributes to the development of a skilled workforce, and in-turn, to ongoing economic development and improved living condition”

Cassidy (2019) highlights the impact that governments can have on school completions, referencing the lift in retention rates from 30% to 70% from 1983 to 1995 under the Hawke-Keating governments
Student engagement and retention – Why is this important?

• The Foundation for Young Australians (FYA, 2018) in their New Work Reality report claim that a “lack of appropriate education and limited employment opportunities and experience will further erode a young persons post-schooling opportunities especially in a rapidly changing workforce”

• Policy makers need to look to new approaches to improve year 12 completions whilst looking to operational models that apply internationally for inspiration

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

• Cooperative education model – linking secondary school credits to work experience

• Managed at the local school board level – focused on local industries

• Funded and coordinated by provincial government

• Pathway opportunity to formal apprenticeships
Careerwise - Colorado

- Marketed as the “Modern Youth Apprenticeship System”
- Linking school completions with apprenticeships
- Industry had direct input into the design of qualifications
- Flexibility is critical

TXRX Labs - Houston

- Community Maker Space
- Philanthropically funded – future funding sources in negotiations with school boards
- Primary school and community focused
- Influencing technology, design and curriculum in primary schools
P-Tech – New York

- Grades 9-12 linking careers, work experience, mentorship and college
- IBM is the primary industry partner – offers graduate positions and peer support
- Open admissions - targets underserved communities in NY
- No cost to families

Central Pennsylvania Institute - Bellafonte

- Similar in nature to the VETIs framework in Victoria
- Greater recognition of VET and external experiences in the completion of a senior secondary outcome
- Supported and flexible qualifications with greater cross-over between school and industry
- Tuition free – focused on future careers and employment outcomes
AgWorks - Cyber Charter School - Harrisburg

- Cyber Charter school
- Students from Kindergarten to Year 12
- No on-site permanent students
- Focused solely on agricultural technologies with a specialization on aquaponics, airponics and hydroponics

Messicks and Dept Agriculture - Harrisburg

- Co-design apprenticeship program to link schools to farms with a formal school completion
- Developed in response to changing nature of the agriculture sector and the rise in new technologies
Recommendations

- Greater collaboration between schools in regional communities
- Credits from high school and TAFE studies being recognized against one Year 12 qualification
- Further investigation of the Swiss Vocational Education system and how this has influenced changes in the Colorado model
- Greater flexibility to add new skill-sets and qualification to meet the needs of industry
- Greater involvement of industry in program design and recognition of their role in future skills and careers

Recommendations

- Further investigation of micro-credentialing and its application in a school outcome
- Greater involvement of careers counsellors in supporting students to achieve their best
- Equity and access for all - remove the financial barriers that limit opportunity for families from disadvantaged circumstances
- Grow the capacity of TAFE’s to research practice and link the outcomes to schools and careers
- Further investment to release teachers to experience real-world industry
- More exposure for students to careers in their local communities
Churchill Fellowship Report


References


Lamb, S, Jackson, J, Walstab, A and Huo, S (2015) Educational opportunity in Australia 2015: Who succeeds and who misses out, Centre for international research on educational systems, Victoria University, for the Mitchell Institute, Melbourne