



BUILDING ASPIRATIONS AND LEARNING LINKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO GO TO UNIVERSITY

THE INVITATION

Murdoch University, and Big Picture Education Australia (BPEA) will collaborate with five schools to create a Big Picture Academy within each school. This is an amazing opportunity for schools to access significant intellectual, human and financial networked and collaborative support to assist with the development and implementation of innovation within their school. Around Australia BPEA has many schools doing this work reliant on their own resources.

Each academy will provide interested students with a different way of engaging with learning. Their learning is structured around their interests, and includes authentic project work in the community. Their learning plan is developed with their advisory teacher. The student has guidance from both academic and interest based expert mentors. The family is engaged to support the student's learning too, minimally, through participation in quarterly individual learning plan meetings and end of term student exhibitions. Students might also enroll in other courses and certificates if essential to their learning and available. The advisory teacher stays with their group from start to finish¹.

In addition BPEA and Murdoch University will set up a process so students who submit a Big Picture Portfolio will gain entry where the academic standards have been met.

All high schools in Kwinana, Rockingham and Mandurah regions are invited to apply and - at most - five will be chosen to participate. The number of participating schools being limited by funding.

Participation will require the schools to demonstrate a willingness to support the implementation of a Big Picture Academy for a sustained future (beyond the initial three year funding support), and a deep interest for participating in teacher development, leadership development, and, participation in the wider Big Picture network and ongoing research.

EXPECTATIONS OF A SCHOOL WITH A BIG PICTURE ACADEMY IN THIS PROJECT

The basic expectation is that a school is willing and able to implement – over the next three years - a Big Picture Academy with at least one class in each of year 10, 11 and 12. BPEA recommends an advisory class would be at most 17 students. Schools can expand the number of advisory classes to suit their context (although the support funding has been calculated for this size structure).

Schools will choose how they begin. It might be one class of year 12 students or all three classes straight away or some combination of these. Minimally schools would begin with one year 10 advisory class.

Any school interested in a larger initiative or extending their initiative to include students at an earlier age, or particular programs (eg academic extension or other engagement programs) or further to re-design their school using the Big Picture principles can negotiate with BPEA.

THE STUDENT COHORT

Student selection is a school based issue but there is an expectation that they be invited to apply for their place in the Big Picture Academy and that students express through an enrolment process involving their family (and not just allocated to the group). There are some target groups of students:

- a student streamed out of the 'top' class but showing an interest in learning and achievement.
- a student who is 'failing' in a 'top' class but not wanting to give up on their dream of tertiary entrance.
- a student who has begun year 11, enrolled in an academic course but now failing
- a student who is a bright 'spark' but bored with school and not working.
- **any student who - with their family - just want to work in this way**

¹ The BPEA Design for School requires more description than this paragraph. Further information is included in the page attached. Further information and materials are available from John.Hogan@bigpond.com. You can also visit <http://www.bigpicture.org.au>

The Big Picture Academy is not a drop out centre for troubled or troublesome students although such a student may gain entry through interest application and family involvement.

The goal of each Big Picture Academy is for students to succeed. That is, they will be in a position to pursue their interests beyond school whether that be university, TAFE, training or substantial work - and when they get there - they will know they have the capacity, disposition and the confidence to succeed.

RATIONALE

Murdoch University wants to increase the number of students from the Kwinana, Rockingham and Mandurah regions who enroll in university and have the capacity, knowledge and skills to succeed when they get there. This includes achieving an increase in the number of students from low SES backgrounds. It has a particular focus on students who have been streamed out or who fail 'out of' the academic pathways in school.

BPEA aims to influence school education in Australia through the implementation of a new design for schooling with the purpose of re-engaging students in learning and improving their chances of graduating to university, TAFE or significant work.

Together BPEA and Murdoch University wish to develop innovative, nationally significant approaches to: student entry to university, and post-graduate study for teachers and leaders.

SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS WITH A BIG PICTURE ACADEMY 2012 – 2015

The support for schools for the duration of the project includes direct funding, support from BPEA and support from Murdoch University.

Direct funding for teacher relief and travel costs for teacher participation in professional learning, communication costs and student travel (for internships, conference, etc).

Support from BPEA through materials for leaders and teachers, professional learning and school coaching, national and international school visits, conferences, and planning and review.

Support from Murdoch University through research, new ideas for university entry, professional recognition of staff development and administration.

The approach to supporting schools has been developed from both the extensive consulting and coaching experience of the BP team and from the literature on the support of school, leader and teacher change and development.

These resources are provided to support the development work required to set up, implement and run the program well. That is, it will help with teacher, leader, academy, and school development. In time, this funding will cease as all academies need to be self-sustaining.

Schools will not get funding to run the academy e.g. teacher salary. Each school will provide the staffing (leadership, teaching and support) to match the numbers of students enrolled in the academy.

We expect that beyond 2015 schools will have embedded the Big Picture Academy into their school, will have considered how to use what they what have learned from this approach across their school, and that the group of schools will have influenced education in the Rockingham/Kwinana and Peel regions and further still that this group of schools together with BPEA and MU will be making a major contribution to school education innovation nationally.

PROCESS FROM HERE...

1. Schools submit an initial expression of interest to John Hogan.
2. Schools visited by John Hogan BPEA to establish relationship, look at the details of the BPEA approach and explore possibilities.
3. Schools submit a proposal including why, who, and how (a game plan). John Hogan will be available to assist schools with their proposal development.
4. Getting started for participating schools: Involves communicating...enrolling students...training staff induction course... participation in national conference...first national school visit...set up program for 2014 (or earlier if ready).