

# Images of a Sustainable Primary School

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**Abstract:** *This piece explores the development of a facilitated workshop for primary school children around sustainability and the children's images of a preferred school environment. A rationale for the Workshop is outlined; design principles and methodologies are discussed, as are the approaches taken to interact with an audience of concrete operational thinkers. The Pilot School for this workshop is used as an example.*

## Introduction

This article outlines a process that was undertaken at the end of 2005 at a suburban Primary School ('The School') in the middle ring of the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne. The process involved children from Levels 3 and 4 and it asked them to imagine what a sustainable school might look like. Sustainability was used in its widest sense – what are those things that make the school nice to be in (sustainable for the students) and also good for the environment? In this piece, the workshop is outlined and some indications given as to the reasons why certain processes were used. Also the outcomes from the pilot workshop are included to give a flavour of how the children reacted to the day.

### **The Need**

*The School has been accepted as part of the Victorian Sustainable Schools Initiative in 2005 and received Local Council funding to undertake a Master Plan mapping exercise with the Gould League in 2006.*

*The Sustainable Schools Initiative is a joint supported by the Department of Environment and Heritage and the Victorian Government. It aims to move students beyond awareness to action and environmental leadership based on co-learning.<sup>1</sup> A review of the material about the Initiative available on the CERES and the Gould League websites indicates that the 'what and how' of sustainability has been necessarily prescribed. The schools have a choice of which paths to follow from a list that includes: waste, water and energy. There are a variety of programs for the school to choose from, one of which is the Master Planning activity.*

*The School will undertake the Master Plan activity as a three half day process with teaching staff, parents and students. The Master Plan involves a well-thought out approach which aims to engage the whole school community. The School had decided to use the Master Plan activities in this development role, and was going to involve selected student representatives in the process.*

*The suggestion for an additional workshop came at the instigation of the author, who is a member of the Sustainability sub-committee of the School Council. An offer to run a workshop which captured the student's visions and imagination around the issue of sustainability at the School was received enthusiastically, the workshop was run in October 2005, the outcomes from it fed into the Gould League workshops and an number of the innovations developed in the workshop have been 'made real' in the school grounds. One of the current Year 6 Environmental Monitors was in the workshop, as were a number of younger students who have indicated they wish to keep involved in the Sustainability Program. A student-centred vision for a sustainable school was an opportunity for the teachers to hand pick participants for their enthusiasm and their ability to act as leaders in the school on this topic.*

Connecting children to their immediate environment is just as important, if not more so, than connecting them to the geography of Australia or the world. Map making, visioning and designing their school environment will give these children a richer school experience by changing the way they see the world that is directly around them.

## Sustainable Schools

The Gould League website describes the Sustainable Schools Initiative as a:

flexible framework of teacher professional development; integrated student activities; and opportunities for community involvement which will improve your school environment; incorporate sustainability into the curriculum; and assist the school community to adopt sustainable practices.<sup>2</sup>

The approach takes a holistic look at the school in its social, economic and support environment and uses sustainability as a way of building community. Many of the initiatives generated through the Framework will require large amounts of volunteer time, something which is in short supply in many schools.

There are twelve key elements in the Framework which are regarded as essential for the Initiative to work. These include collecting baseline data, forming a committee, conducting an audit, and developing curriculum plans. The journey to sustainability is a six step process from awareness through engagement, to action, involvement, interaction then to leadership. Each step is well thought out and allows the school to follow the path.

The Sustainable Schools program is one of large number now running in countries all over the world. It stems from the United Nations push to educate children on the need for sustainable development which started at a UNESCO conference in 1977.<sup>3</sup> UNESCO had a work plan, through Agenda 21 and the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to encourage education schemes around sustainable development, with its associated issues of poverty, globalisation and democracy. This approach was traditionally known as Environmental Education and aimed to provide positive experiences for students so they would learn to value the environment and would therefore wish to protect it.

In fact, this approach was not as successful as expected, so the push in the UK, US and Canada, has been towards Education *for* Sustainability. This movement has used the UN initiatives as a springboard, at the same time redefining what the aims of education around this issue should be.

Instead of educating for sustainable development, these initiatives “highlight the possibilities for schools to innovate and showcase changes in practice for a better future. Some programs are documenting deep levels of change resulting in cultural shifts within schools and the wider community”.<sup>4</sup> The focus of these programs is an appreciation of the complexity of the issues facing the environment, the aim of equipping citizens with systemic thinking skills, and the placement of critical enquiry as central to the endeavour.<sup>5</sup>

Whole of school sustainability programs have been running for around 10 years in many parts of the globe, with the Australian experience starting in 2002 and the first programs are now reaching their review and evaluation stages.

## **Pilot – ‘The School’**

The School is in a low density housing area in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, Australia. In the 2001 census 10% of the suburb’s population was aged 5-14 years, mostly in the area around the Primary School.<sup>6</sup> At that stage, 22% of the population came from a non-English speaking background (NESB)<sup>7</sup> and it is likely that this percentage has increased in the past 4 years. Compared to other suburbs in the Council area it has relatively low levels of University graduates (17%) and higher than the municipal average of persons with no qualifications (51%).<sup>8</sup> Many parents work long hours, they are interested in the School but volunteerism is dropping. Lack of after school involvement by families resulted in high levels of vandalism, especially to the landscaping efforts of the Parents Association over the past couple of years. The suburb has not attracted those with higher incomes in the municipality, and overall, it is second in terms of levels of disadvantage in the local council area, and in the past, it has been overlooked by those in the political process as there are louder voices in other areas of the community.

The School is trying to change this situation through the efforts of the Principal, teachers, parents and students. Money has been spent translating the Newsletter into Mandarin and holding information nights with an interpreter to try and engage the NESB portion of the school community. A tree planting day was held in 2005 by parents to build ownership of the trees and gardens by the students. The Junior School Council has appointed Environmental Monitors who have been responsible for running rubbish free days and encouraging students to clean up mess when they find it in the grounds.

With these factors in mind, and after passing a critical eye over the suggested Master Plan process, it became obvious that a key part of what will be needed at The School was ownership of the sustainability initiatives on the part of the children. This would try to ensure that some of the vandalism would stop as word spread that the children were in charge of the improvements, and it was felt that some of the damage had been done by ex-students of the school.

The Sustainable Schools Program does tackle this idea as well, and ownership was built through the Gould League workshops also. However, as there were only going to be a small number of students represented in those workshops there was still a need for an image of a sustainable school which had been developed by more of the student body. It was planned that this work could be used effectively as a feeder into the Master Plan activities which were due to be held in Term 1, 2006.

An offer was made by the author to develop a facilitated imaging workshop for the students. The term ‘imaging’ was chosen to move away from ‘visioning’ and ‘creating’ both of which are used by the Sustainable Schools Initiative. The Principal was receptive and the proposal for the workshop was drafted with the input of parents and teachers.

The workshop needed to be as comprehensive and effective as possible in its use of class time. Where possible, its activities included the curriculum requirements for the time it substituted in the school day. The workshop will also served as experience for student teachers from the Bachelor of Education course at Monash University who acted as group facilitators for the school students.

## **Working with children**

The author's previous experience in workshop design has been with an adult audience. As she is not a trained educationalist, further research into the audience was required. To understand the levels of thinking that may be in the room and the challenges this posed for the Workshop, theories of child development were briefly examined.

### **Levels of Development and foresight**

Developmentally, children have a varying ability to understand and represent the future. This had a large impact on the types of methods that could be used and the structure of the process which was designed. The level of temporal understanding of a child is directly linked to their cognitive stage. Using Piaget's work on the development of cognition, the students in the Workshop were aged 8 to 12, in his terms - classic concrete operational thinkers.

As children with concrete operational thinking develop, they begin to use cognitive maps, both spatially and temporally, and are able to sequence. However, these abilities are only in evidence when they are dealing with concrete objects, if one asks them to apply this thinking to abstract areas, such as the future, and they will not be able to manipulate information in the same ways.<sup>9</sup>

Children at the concrete operational stage need:

- timelines which allow them to think sequentially
- the chance to try out their ideas which gives them the concrete experience of reality
- brief and well organised lectures to ensure their attention
- familiar examples for use with complex ideas to stretch their thinking
- problems which need analytical and logical thinking.<sup>10</sup>

Although some ability for abstract thought was required, there were enough concrete activities to ensure the children were engaged and interested in the Workshop process.

Children can also show a great deal of comfort with being creative. Children will draw for hours, build intricate models and have imaginary friends. Creativity is a large part of foresight work, and much time is spent in workshops helping people feel comfortable enough to 'unleash' their creativity. In theory, children should be less inhibited but it seems that formal schooling can work against creativity, "about age 9 or 10, creative children often experience the 'fourth-grade slump' marked by a significant reduction in creative production".<sup>11</sup> This age group can start to become self conscious, so efforts were made in the workshop to make them feel comfortable and part of a group. The table facilitators were asked to gently guide the groups to ensure that everyone was heard and respected. The School's code of conduct for students, including respect for others, was useful here.

### **Views of the future**

The Lego Learning Institute (2004) commissioned researchers from the Sorbonne University in Paris to undertake a cross-cultural study into children's life perspectives and their representations of the future. Fifty-four semi-structured interviews with 8-14 year olds were

undertaken in six countries, and the research was published under the title '*I Would be Happy if the Future Made Me a Normal Person: How children tell of their future*'.

This report found that children's view of the future is influenced to a great extent by the media and science fiction they are exposed to. Their images do "not stem from an autonomous children's imaginary but rather from a collective imaginary produced by adults and transmitted by the media". These futures images were held in tandem with the expressed wish to hold on to the "continuity, stability and ...what is known and familiar".<sup>12</sup> The researchers also found that the children held a "very precise picture of contemporary society...marked by enormous influence of public media...a culturally diverse society...and material prosperity".<sup>13</sup>

The children expressed some feelings of pessimism and helplessness in the face of large scale problems<sup>14</sup>, these were highly influenced by the "images of the world offered to them by the media".<sup>15</sup> In addition, "children's views of the future are highly grounded in the positive and negative sides of their own present lives"<sup>16</sup>, where they felt that they faced something negative in their present life they wanted to make it better for their future. They were able to make positive, confident statements about the way their futures would turn out and were curious to see what happened.

When asked about their ideal school, the answers were very interesting. The children dreamed of "a school where the student-teacher relationship is based on interactivity and involvement in the learning process, a relation with room for informality, trust and the rejection of authoritarianism".<sup>17</sup> They also wanted "a spacious and enchanting physical environment"<sup>18</sup> that offered challenges, imagination and allowed them to be in contact with people, nature, animals and lots of space.

## **Workshop Design**

### **Why ask the children?**

Asking students to envision how they wish their school to be will be enriching for them personally, and it will help engender a sense of community and empowerment in the group. Experiences in other places have shown that involving children in helping to plan their school "transforms student's attitudes; when given a voice about what they want in their school, they feel excitement, ownership and pride".<sup>19</sup>

The children have the opportunity to make suggestions, as a group, to the process of mapping their school's future and the sustainability initiatives they could focus upon. For example, a vision of what a sustainable school might look like, communicated to the school community from the students may encourage more of a community effort than previous activities in the school that have been initiated by parents and/or teachers. There is also an issue with expectations of the level of volunteer activity in the school community which is exacerbated by cultural backgrounds. The workshop may be a way in which these differences can be explored.

Asking children to imagine themselves in the future can be very fruitful if one wants to engage with hope and hopelessness, however when the aim is to create a new future, it may be more revealing to look at the:

- Weight of the past – what do we want to keep?

- Pull of the future – where do we want to be?
- Push of the present - what is moving us now?

Viewing a preferred future through these three questions will encourage the child to appreciate the good things about the current situation and to select some parts to take forward. The pull of the future is the generation of an image, and the push of the present gives the tension between what we have and what we want, pushing us to engage in negotiation for outcomes.

A number of other elements have been used in this workshop design, these are outlined below.

## **Community Mapping**

### *Description*

Mapping is usually a commercial exercise which is done by professionals for groups. They are drawn to delineate power in the community – who owns what is the usual driving force behind them – they become the ‘reality’ of the situation and are the representation of the weight of past decisions. As Maeve Lydon from the Common Ground Mapping Program writes:

If map making by developers and colonial explorers has been the vehicle for domination of nature...perhaps map-making by grassroots groups can help restore the foundations for a sustainable way of life...If maps do express our relation to place, then community and ecological recovery depends on re-mapping and re-presenting the worlds around us.<sup>20</sup>

Schools and school grounds have traditionally been designed *for* children by well-meaning adults, who *know* what is best, not by the children themselves. Sometimes these designs are inspired; more recently playground design has taken into account what students need in a play area.

The School was designed in the 1960’s and is an example design via the Industrial Model.<sup>21</sup> This model, with the lecture style seating, and the teacher’s desk at the front of the room are familiar to many. In schools where the teachers have tried to make the rooms look less like this example, the physical layout of the building and the requirement for computers in the classrooms, has meant they are not always successful. The grounds reflect the instrumental rationality central in this approach, with an effective use of space devoid of character and spirit.

Children, especially those in the younger grades, develop their self-concepts in relation to their environment.<sup>22</sup> Preschools and childcare centres are now designed very differently to primary schools, with the relevance to the child as central, and the shock experienced by 5 and 6 year olds as they make the transition to school cannot be overlooked. This experience is not only in the classroom, it also translates to the play areas and the ‘feel’ of the school grounds.

A mapping exercise will help the children dream about what they want in their school, rather than accepting what they have been bequeathed.

### *Applicability*

Children at the concrete operational level of development need to be able to place and locate their ideas in the world, rather than at the level of abstraction. Using a mapping technique will allow them to ‘dream’ but at the same time, locate their ideas spatially and, with help from their facilitators, temporally.

The students at the school are overwhelmingly at pre-operational and concrete operational stages of development. The outcomes of the workshop need to be artefacts which have instant applicability to these groups. Pictures, drawings, pictorial maps etc will be more powerful than statements about visions and goals. The Map is a wonderful artefact from the workshop that the school community can share.

## **Visioning**

### *Description*

The visioning method used in this workshop has been designed to make the students feel as comfortable as possible about imagining a preferred future. A closed eye visioning script was first considered, but the need for less abstract methods has meant that this has been replaced by time spent as an individual writing or drawing their dreams. It is hoped that this process will be more concrete for them, and as children are less wedded to their 'reality' a full visualisation process is not considered as important as it would be if one was working with adults.

The tables in the room are covered with butcher's paper and the students have crayons, coloured pens and pencils. There is also A4 paper available for them as well. Their instruction is to imagine what the School would look like if it was more sustainable and to draw or write their creations on the paper. These will become one of the outputs of the day and can be displayed in the Library for the other students to look at.

## **'Creations'**

### *Description*

The process of 'goal setting', 'innovation development' or 'action items' is an important part of a foresight engagement as it moves the participants to act after they have dreamed and designed their preferred future.

This part of the Workshop has been based on the lessons from Hope Theory about the need for clear, defined goals; articulated pathways (waypower) and empowerment leading to action (willpower). This deliberate process of devising 'creations' is designed to move the group forward by engaging these three elements and allowing the students to enact their visions in a timely manner.

### *Applicability*

In this setting, the applicability of this process of goal setting will need to be carefully managed. The students must leave the day knowing that their ideas will be taken on board by the larger school community. There may also be some opportunities to generate small innovations that the students themselves can implement as part of a wider sustainability agenda at the school. Engaging and empowering the students to think of the school as their place is a very important outcome of this workshop for the school.

## **The Workshop**

### *Design*

Concrete operational thinking requires a style of facilitation which takes this mode of interaction with reality into account. Some principles which have been used when designing this process, are as follows:

- Concrete props and visual aids
- Progression of ideas
- Brief lectures
- Using familiar examples to help explain complex ideas

The process has been designed around a school day. It will be held outside, in the school grounds, as much as possible so the students are in the environment they are dreaming about. The Workshop has been designed in three parts: Dream, Design, Do. This represents the three parts of Hope theory – goals, waypower and willpower.<sup>23</sup>

#### *Workshop Objectives*

- Community Building through participative processes
- Exposure of primary students to ideas of spatial and temporal change
- Greater understanding of sustainability aims
- Empowerment of students as part of the school community
- Enhancement of student's ownership of the school grounds

#### *Workshop Outputs*

- 'Visions of a sustainable school' – large drawn sheets of ideas about what the 'best' school would look like.
- 'The Map' – representation of the ideas generated in the workshop in a form which can be easily discussed and displayed.
- Development of ideas about environment and sustainability.
- Slogan for communication of outcomes to wider school community
- Brief workshop report for circulation to the wider community

#### *Time*

This process is designed as a one day workshop around school breaks of 90 minutes.

#### *Participants*

25 students - 5 groups of 5 students

5 adults - one on each table

1 facilitator

#### *Room requirements*

A room in the school large enough for five tables plus an area for the large group – preferably with view of the playground, if the weather permits, the workshop can be held outside after the first phase.

#### *Workshop timing*

The workshop should be done in one school day as it needs a flow to occur within the group. If it was required to be split, then some slight adjustments to the running order would be required.

#### *Pre-workshop preparation*

- Junior School Council Environmental Monitors (or equivalent) are asked to survey use of the grounds for the two weeks before the workshops – graphical representation of the use of different areas can be used in the workshop.
- Table facilitators are briefed on what they will be asked to do in the workshop.

- Students should be given some idea as to what will happen on the day and asked to think about concepts of sustainability and the future.
- Agreement with the Principal as to how the outputs of the workshop will be utilised.

## Workshop Stages

Each of the stages is explained with some information about what happened at The School in this example.

### Dream

During the first phase the students discuss what they know about sustainability as a large group using a number of images to help generate conversation. The concept of a sustainable school is introduced, as is the idea of imagining the school they want. To build a link to the present and help the students appreciate their current environment, they are asked to identify all those things the school and its community are *not* doing to be sustainable. These are listed on a whiteboard in topics – water, energy, biodiversity, waste and caring. The students are then placed in small groups and given a topic, they are asked to generate a list of things the school community *could* be doing to counteract the previous list of behaviours. These are written on the same whiteboard in a different colour.

*After an exercise to investigate what they knew about sustainability, the students were asked whether the School was sustainable. Their replies were equivocal – ‘we are doing things’, ‘we are trying’, ‘we have started’, ‘sort of’ and depends. I pushed them to positions of ‘yes’ or ‘no’ and they all answered ‘no’. So we made a list of things the School wasn’t doing. The students said that some things that had been started on, but felt that in all cases there was more they could do to be sustainable.*

After a break, usually recess, they come back into a room which is quiet with music playing. The children are asked to take their shoes off and lie on the floor to listen to the music. This brings them back into the space and calms them down after running around.

While they are on the floor, they are asked to remember at the list of things they thought the school should do and imagine what their school would look like if all these things were done. They are then asked to spend 5-10 minutes drawing or writing about those things they imagined. This future is not a long time away, rather it a preferred future space. Again, in small groups they discuss and then agree on ideas that will make the School a better place to be. This is not conceived of as a physical space, rather a valued space.

*After recess the children came back into the room and did a closed eye visioning for 3-5 minutes with music, thinking about a ‘better’ School. This was a school that did all the items they had identified, they moved from the floor to the tables and were asked to think about the things that were most important to them. They could draw on the paper table cloths or on sheets of paper with a view to explaining to their small group what the idea they had was all about.*

*The table facilitators then worked with the groups to share their ideas and have them placed on large sheets of paper stuck up on the walls to outline the group’s vision of a ‘better’ School.*

*Each group presented their visions and it became obvious that there were many similarities. These vision sheets are at the school and have been prominently displayed in the foyer and library for over 6 months.*

*The 'ideas in common' were collated onto one list and placed in groups. When the children came back from lunch they were asked to revisit the visions and think about what it felt like to be a student - their responses were 'excited', 'enthusiastic' and 'proud'. They were then asked what it would be like to be a teacher in the new worlds – one response that was popular was 'they would be pleased we were so busy'!*

The large group convenes to hear the reports back from each group. The groups will each have a blank piece of the paper on which to draw their imagined space. During the lunch break, the ideas are collated into a list for the children to see upon their return. Any instances of replication are noted.

### *Design*

The Design phase comes after a break in which the ideas have been rearranged for the participants into themed areas. With a group of adults, they would be asked to do this process themselves; the students may find this task too onerous so it is done by the facilitators.

Once the group comes back into the room, they will be split into small groups – each with a themed area to develop, i.e. water, energy, etc. The ideas from the previous session now need to be streamlined into three creations on each theme. These are then moved onto a large current paper map of the school at the front of the room.

The large group reviews the map and the new creations; any reorganisation of creations and groups takes place at this point. Small groups are formed again with a brief to develop the three creations into action plans. The facilitators will be of help here, giving the students guidance as to timelines, people who they might need for help etc. The groups can be taken outside by the facilitator to check their creations spatially and make whatever adjustments are needed to their plans.

*Once back in the room, the groups placed their ideas on a larger map of the school to see overlaps/conflicts. It was gratifying that the groups were thinking each other when they designed areas – the group with the bird baths had considered the vegetation group's idea of a flower garden when placing one of the baths. The final list of creations was then confirmed – some had dropped off, others had been added. Each Creation was given a champion to be responsible for its implementation. These champions will not be doing all the work, rather they will start the process off and work out what needs to be done. All the students were keen to be involved in this.*

*Questions were asked a number of times around whether these things 'were going to actually happen'. Many of the children were unbelieving as to the seriousness with which their ideas would be taken. They are very enthusiastic and much of this seems to stem from their belief that they are being listened to. It was explained to them that things take time and not everything could be done instantly, and they seemed to accept this.*

The groups reconvene to review what they saw outside and then to report back to the larger group. At this stage the Principal or Assistant Principal should be in the room for the large

group to agree that the list of creations will move into the next phase. Agreements are made between the Champions and the Principal as to which students will undertake them and delivery dates.

The final activity is for the group to decide how they want to represent the workshop to the wider school group; a slogan for should be devised to tell the other students what happened and two of the participants nominated to report back to the school assembly.

## Links to current curriculum

### *Victorian Essential Learning Standards – Level 3-4*

The teaching program at the school is driven by the curriculum outcomes required by the Government. In order to make the time required for workshop less onerous to make up for students and teachers, elements of the new learning standards have been mapped to the process and outcomes of the Workshop. This has been done for Level 3 students and Level 4 students as these will be the groups most likely to take part in the Workshop.

### *Level 3 Outcomes*

Strand	Domains	Dimensions	Key Elements
<b>Physical, Personal and Social Learning</b>	Interpersonal Development	Building social relationships	..share ideas and materials, offer appropriate assistance and giving appropriate feedback...
		Working in teams	...cooperate for agreed purposes, taking roles and following guidelines... evaluate contributions towards goals and the team's progress...
<b>Interdisciplinary Learning</b>	Design, Creativity and Technology	Investigating and designing	Generate ideas based on a design
		Producing	...plan basic steps in a production
	Thinking	Creativity	...apply creative ideas in practical ways and test the possibilities of the ideas they generate...use open-ended questions and integrate available information
		Reflection, evaluation, and metacognition	Use strategies to organise their ideas...appropriate language to explain their thinking. They identify and provide reasons for their point of view and justify changes in their thinking.

### *Level 4 Outcomes*

Strand	Domains	Dimensions	Key Elements
<b>Physical, Personal and Social Learning</b>	Interpersonal Development	Working in teams	...work effectively in different teams and take on a variety of roles...accept responsibility for their roles and tasks
<b>Discipline Based Learning</b>	Geography	Geospatial Skills	...accurately describe the distance, direction and location of places. They identify features from maps ...draw sketch maps of their neighbourhood

			using simple mapping conventions.
<b>Interdisciplinary Learning</b>	Communication	Listening, viewing and responding	...ask clarifying questions, develop interpretations and provide reasons for them
		Presenting	...use a range of presentation formats to summarise ideas and organise information logically and clearly to meet the needs of audience and purpose
	Design, Creativity and Technology	Investigating and designing	...research, collect data and generate ideas in response to design brief ...use a range of strategies to develop ideas that contribute to new design briefs...
	Thinking	Creativity	...generate imaginative solutions when solving problems. They demonstrate flexibility in their thinking in a range of contexts
Reflection, evaluation and metacognition		...use a broad range of thinking processes and tools, and reflect on and evaluate their effectiveness. They articulate their thinking processes.	

(VCAA (2005) Levels 3 and 4)

## Conclusion

The workshop ‘Images of a Sustainable Primary School’ aims to take students into their preferred future space at their school. Asking a group of 8-12 year olds how they would like their school to look and feel is a first step to engaging and empowering them as a community.

Designing a workshop for children, as opposed to adults, has been a challenge and one which has shed new light on the efficacy and applicability of many foresight methods. Some were too unwieldy for use in a school setting, while others did not hold enough of an action orientation. This design has been influenced by the feedback received from teachers, parents and children about what sounded reasonable, achievable, and above all, fun.

*The School has implemented more than 50% of the creations imagined by the students. There is a vegetable patch, a new outdoor classroom, outdoor stage, new garden beds and seated eating areas. The School has achieved two of the sustainability areas set out by the Gould League and have been awarded these at an assembly. The amount of vandalism has decreased; for example, the vegetable garden is full of plants and has survived the school holidays. The students are aware, at all year levels, of the impact they can have on the sustainability of the school and what this means in the wider world.*

This Workshop is a response to the opportunity many schools has been given to develop their surrounds and practices to become more sustainable. The program developed by CERES and the Gould League is well thought out and the framework supports schools in their endeavours to meet self-set goals. In their process, students will be involved in the implementation phase of the project, but the author felt that they also needed to be engaged before the project began. This is primarily so the students could contribute their images of the future to the sustainability

conversation, but also to ensure that the values reflected in the decisions made about what it means for schools to be sustainable reflect the desires of a large sample of the student body.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> CERES (2004) p1

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.gould.edu.au/article.asp?id=6834>

<sup>3</sup> UNESCO (1997) p1

<sup>4</sup> Henderson and Tilbury (2004) p7

<sup>5</sup> Ibid p8

<sup>6</sup> Whitehorse p9

<sup>7</sup> Ibid p21

<sup>8</sup> Ibid p27 – 30

<sup>9</sup> Berk (2000) p249-253

<sup>10</sup> Huitt (1997) p2

<sup>11</sup> Presbury and Benson (1990)

<sup>12</sup> Lego Learning Institute (2004) p6

<sup>13</sup> Ibid p11

<sup>14</sup> Ibid p12

<sup>15</sup> Ibid p8

<sup>16</sup> Ibid p7

<sup>17</sup> Ibid p13

<sup>18</sup> Ibid p15

<sup>19</sup> Borden (2004) p1

<sup>20</sup> Common Ground Mapping Program (2000) p2 of 5

<sup>21</sup> Lackney (2001) p6 of 19

<sup>22</sup> Lackney (2001) p6 of 19

<sup>23</sup> Dermott and Snyder (2000) p6-8

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