



MELBOURNE HIGH SCHOOL MENTORING PROGRAM PLAN

A Joint Initiative Between
Melbourne High School
and
The Green, Maroon and Black Patrons Club,
Melbourne High School Old Boys Association.



10 February 2005

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Mentoring involves an older, more experienced person guiding and helping a younger person in his or her development.¹ The idea of school-based mentoring programs is relatively new to Australia but is well established overseas and is gaining momentum locally. Mentoring programs benefit both students and mentors and are an important mechanism for strengthening school-community links.

Mentoring programs complement other career guidance support in schools. Indeed school-based mentoring programs are now recognised and supported by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) as part of the Career and Transition Services Framework.² Under the framework, mentoring programs form part of a local support network which complements the Managed Individual Pathways provided by the Government funded 'Stepping Forward' program.³ Melbourne High School already supports this program and aims to provide each student with an individual case management approach to career planning.⁴

The Melbourne High School Mentoring Program is a joint initiative between the School and the Green, Maroon and Black Patrons Club (GM&B) of the Melbourne High School Old Boys Association (MHSOBA). On 11 October 2004 the GM&B resolved to develop an initiative for a mentoring program at Melbourne High to be run in conjunction with the School, commencing in 2005. The Acting Principal, Ms Sue Bell was encouraged by the suggestion and invited the GM&B to develop a proposal. The GM&B formed a Committee and developed the proposal which was presented to the newly appointed Principal, Mr Jeremy Ludowyke, on 20 January 2005. Mr Ludowyke supported the proposal and endorsed the implementation of the Melbourne High School Mentoring Program, subject to formal approval by the School Council.

1.2 Aim

This plan outlines the development and implementation of the Melbourne High School Mentoring Program, commencing in 2005.

1.3 Scope

The scope of the plan is as follows:

- Purpose of the program;
- Development and implementation plan;
- Policy framework;
- Administration and logistics; and
- Control and communications.

¹ MacCallum and Beltman, 'Mentoring Research Project', Murdoch University, 1999, pi.

² 'Career and Transition Services Framework: An Effective National Approach to Youth Transitions', Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), 2003, p7.

³ 'STEPPING FORWARD – Improving Pathways for all Young People', MCEETYA, 2002

⁴ extract from 'Careers' section of Melbourne High School internet site available at http://resources.mhs.vic.edu.au/mhs/curriculum_careers.asp

2 Purpose of the Program

2.1 Mission Statement

Melbourne High School will provide **career guidance and personal development** for selected students through a formal mentoring program in conjunction with the Green, Maroon and Black Patrons Club of the Melbourne High School Old Boys Association.

2.2 Goals and Objectives

Goals. The goals of the Melbourne High School Mentoring Program are to:

- Provide career guidance to students,
- Encourage personal development of students,
- Promote school-community links, and
- Further demonstrate the value of the MHSOBA through the GM&B to the school.

Objectives. The program aims to provide benefits to the students involved, to the mentors, and to the School as follows:

Benefits to Selected Students

- **Career guidance**
 - career advice from a mentor with professional experience in a relevant field
 - assist student in making career choices
 - suggest options and pathways for career development
- **Personal Development**
 - develop positive attitudes to work, career, and community
 - promote adult interpersonal relationships
 - provision of a positive role model
 - enhance students communication skills and socialisation in the community
 - other specific objectives for the student agreed at the start of the program (recorded using a 'plan on a page' document).

Benefits to Mentors

- provide a sense of personal and professional fulfillment
- demonstrate the GM&B and MHSOBA contribution to school community.

Benefits to Melbourne High School

- complement career guidance provided by other staff and programs
- strengthen school-community links and relationships

2.3 Values and Philosophy

Values. The Melbourne High School Mentoring Program seeks to reinforce and promote the ethos of the School, encapsulated in the School motto, 'Honour the Work'. The Program aims to promote the following values in conjunction with the School:

- Honour
- Leadership
- Integrity
- Excellence

Philosophy – The philosophy guiding the program is that it is to be school-based, voluntary, and driven by the needs of selected students. The School will retain overall control of the program at all times. Parental consent is required for all students. The GM&B will support the program particularly in providing suitable mentors from the Old Boy community. The program is to have defined objectives, responsibilities, and entry and exit points.

3 Development and Implementation Plan

3.1 Overview of the Program

The Melbourne High School Mentoring Program is to be a structured program with a staged development plan, starting with a pilot program in 2005. The aim is to start small and build on success.

Student Selection. The School Program Coordinator will be responsible for the selection of a small number of students (target of six students for the pilot program in 2005, building progressively in subsequent years). Selected students will enter the program late in Year 11 and exit in late Year 12.

Mentor Selection. The students will be selected first, and then the mentors sourced to meet the needs of the students. The GM&B Program Coordinator will be responsible for the recruitment and screening of mentors.

Matching Students to Mentors. The School and GM&B Program Coordinators will match students to mentors. A 'getting to know you' day will then be held to allow the potential participants to get acquainted prior to committing to the Program.

'Sign-Up'. Following the 'getting to know you' day, both the students and mentors will sign a written undertaking to participate in the program. This will in effect form the 'contract' between them for the conduct of the mentoring program.

3.2 Implementation Plan

3.2.1 Phase 1 – Establishing the MHS Mentoring Program

3.2.1.1 Mentoring Model

The mentoring model selected is a formal, one-to-one, long term (12 month), program with a series of focussed, guided activities and review points. The crucial component of mentoring is the trust that develops between the student and the mentor⁵, and this model is considered the most appropriate to build such trust.

3.2.1.2 Scope

As the mission statement makes clear, the initial focus of the Melbourne High School Mentoring Program is limited to career guidance and personal development for selected students. The Program will not select students considered 'at risk', either academically or personally, at least during the pilot program. The main reason for this is that the mentors volunteering for the program may not have the skills and training to be effective in this role. The scope of the program may be reviewed as part of the formal evaluation process; however the initial focus is limited to career guidance and personal development.

3.2.1.3 Guidelines

Guidelines for the conduct of the program are to be developed separately to this plan. The guidelines will cover student involvement and mentor involvement.

Student Guidelines. The student guidelines will cover:

- Description of the Mentoring Program – including its parameters
- How mentoring can help students in making career choices (introductory notes from the Principal).
- Eligibility requirements for students
- Expectations of student participation and behaviour
- Student and Parent / Guardian Consent form

Mentor Guidelines. The mentor guidelines will cover:

- Description of the Mentoring Program
- How mentoring can help students in making career choices (introductory notes from the Principal).
- Role of the Mentor
- Responsibilities of the Mentor
- Mentor screening, matching and training procedures
- On-going support for mentors – coordination, communication and further training
- Policy guidance (confidentiality, duty of care, insurance, do's and don'ts)
- Mentor Consent form

⁵ MacCallum and Beltman, *ibid.*

3.2.1.4 Pilot Program in 2005

Dates	Activity	Remarks
By 11 Feb 05	Identify potential students	School Coord
	Identify mentors	GM&B
	Student-Mentor matching	
Wed 23 Mar 05	Initial Mentor Training	School and GM&B Coord
Sun 3 Apr 05	'Get-to-know-you' day (Note: attendance is a pre-requisite for participation in the program for both students and mentors)	Sponsored activity, away from School grounds, team building activities, social lunch, one-to-one time to talk about expectations, goal setting and activity planning, plus separate parents information briefing and 'meet the mentors'.
Mon 18 Apr 05	'Sign-Up' day	Students and mentors commit – sign written undertaking to participate in the program
Apr – Sep 05	Series of six one-to-one mentoring activities	Approx one per month – timing flexible to suit students and mentors
May 05	One-month 'check-up' review	School coord to talk to students, GM&B coord to contact mentors
Jul 05	Bi-monthly review	School & GM&B coords plus GM&B Mentoring Committee
Aug 05	Pilot Program Evaluation	Inform program development for 2006
16 Sep 05 (end term 3)	Pilot Program Concludes	

3.2.2 Phase 2 – Selection and Training of Program Participants

3.2.2.1 Selection and Preparation of Students

The steps involved in the selection and preparation of students are in outline:

- Identify potential students (aim to shortlist about 10, then select six for the pilot program in 2005)
- Explain the program to students and provide information to parents – confirm interest and need
- Define students specific areas of interest and needs from the mentoring program
- Students to complete initial questionnaire for use in selecting an appropriate mentor (questionnaire to be prepared and administered by the School Coordinator)

- School Coordinator to profile student profile to GM&B Coordinator to assist in mentor selection.

3.2.2.2 Selection and Screening of Mentors

The steps involved in the selection and screening of mentors are in outline:

- Identify potential mentors to match the students - driven by needs of the student – use GM&B and MHSOBA contacts to recruit.
- Mentors will be selected that have relevant expertise, are non-judgemental, open minded, able to relate to young people, and possess good people skills.
- ‘Ideal’ mentor qualities would include the ability to:
 - see their student as a special person and be comfortable with differences in background
 - set high standards and instil in their student the confidence to meet those expectations
 - respect the student’s ability and right to make their own choices in life
 - empathise and understand the students struggles, rather than pity or judge them
 - see solutions as well as barriers
 - be flexible and open
 - serve as friends, listeners, role models, advocates, tutors, negotiators, sounding boards, supporters, critics and networkers
 - share resources, experience and knowledge
 - observe confidentiality
 - show interest, mutual respect and kindness
 - show enthusiasm for particular subject or interest areas and an awareness of related moral issues
 - use their communication skills to foster interaction in informal settings.⁶
- Explain the program to mentors – confirm interest
- Screen mentors – signed application by the mentor (including referees available), police check, personal interview by GM&B, list of proposed mentors to be endorsed by School Council as ‘Volunteers’ – same process as that used for appointing Officers of Cadets.
- Mentors to be provided with student profile and questionnaire prior to entering the program. (Within the rules of privacy legislation, mentors need to be made aware of unusual or extenuating circumstances that come with each student, and this will be provided by the School Coordinator).
- GM&B Coordinator to provide mentor profile (i.e. a short biographical brief) to the School Coordinator for the students’ information prior to the ‘Get-to-know-you’ day.

3.2.2.3 Training of Mentors

- Initial training of mentors is to be conducted before ‘sign-up’ day. The indicative scope of this training is as follows:
 - How the School currently works, who’s who on the staff and what other career guidance programs are provided
 - How to be a mentor – some suggestions for conduct of the one-to-one activity sessions

⁶ Adapted from MacCallum and Beltman, *ibid*, p 105.

- Understanding adolescents
- Drug and alcohol abuse awareness
- Suicide awareness
- Active listening skills
- Career guidance resources available

3.2.2.4 Matching Students and Mentors

- In matching students to mentors the School and GM&B Program Coordinators will aim to find a good ‘fit’ based on their knowledge of both the student and the mentor. The following factors will be taken into account in this matching process:
 - the needs of the student;
 - the expertise of the mentor; and
 - the personality, style and background of both the student and the mentor.

3.2.3 Phase 3 – Implementation of Program

3.2.3.1 One-to-One Mentoring Activities

Parental consent will be required for each activity. The GM&B Coordinator and the School Coordinator will keep the school informed of all mentoring activities.

Activity	Description	Format	Location
1.	About me –career and life review	Presentation by mentor to student	School
2.	About me – my life so far / what I want to do	Presentation by student to mentor (produce ‘Plan-on-a-Page’ document by the end of this activity – specific objectives for the student for the mentoring program to achieve.)	School
3.	Getting to know you – attend a social, sporting, cultural, recreational or similar event together and explore common interests	Joint visit / activity	Public venue
4.	Options – career goals and life goals	Joint discussion	School
5.	Pathways – further education, employment, information and resources available	Joint discussion	School
6.	Practical / Extension Activity – flexible format (eg a workplace visit, work experience placement, attendance at university open day, careers night or other activity).	Joint visit / activity	Workplace, University campus, School or other

3.2.3.2 Conduct of One-to-One Mentoring Activities

Regular, consistent contact between the student and the mentor is required. The conduct of the six one-to-one activities described above works out to about one activity per month and is considered to be realistic and achievable (taking into account term breaks and requirements to take time out to study for exams).

The locations listed above for students and mentors to meet are a guide to what is appropriate. Obviously there can be flexibility exercised between the mentors and the students as to where and when these activities will occur (provided parents are consulted and give their consent). However there is no obligation for the conduct of social activities, beyond the program-sponsored activities described in this plan.

3.2.3.3 On-Going Support for Program Participants

The GM&B Coordinator will maintain regular contact with all mentors and keep them informed of developments. The School Coordinator will maintain regular contact with all students in the program. As a minimum, this contact with mentors and students will occur at the one-month 'check-up' and as part of the bi-monthly reviews thereafter. Also, the School Coordinator will be the primary point of contact for any concerns that either students or mentors have in relation to the conduct of the program.

In addition to the on-going support provided by the School and GM&B Coordinators, a variety of information and support for mentors is available on the internet, including:

- 'Mentoring Australia – official website of the National Mentoring Association of Australia Inc' <http://www.dsf.org.au/mentor/index.htm> (includes information, research, free subscription to mailing list, and mentoring support network / community of practise established on Yahoo)
- Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) <http://www.mceetya.edu.au/> (in particular, the 'Stepping Forward' program and the role of school-based mentoring in local support networks, and the Career and Transitions Services Framework links)
- Murdoch University Mentoring Research Project, 1999, report by Judith MacCallum and Susan Beltman available at <http://www.detya.gov.au/archive/schools/publications/1999/mentoring.htm>
- SCISCO Career Pathways <http://www.scisco.org.au> (another example of an innovative Local Support Network linking Gold Coast schools, community and agencies to enhance career outcomes for young people.)

3.2.3.4 Parent Involvement

Parental support is essential and students will only participate in the Mentoring Program if they have signed parental / guardian consent. Parents will be kept informed of all mentoring activities by the School Coordinator.

If parents have concerns with any aspect of the conduct of the Mentoring Program, they will be directed to contact the School Coordinator in the first instance.

It is critical that the parents are not shown to be in any way as deficient or sub-standard as role models for their sons. Great care must be taken by mentors to not undermine any tenuous relationships that exist (which may have brought about the need - perceived or not - for mentoring in the first place).

3.2.3.5 Conclusion of the Program

Participation in the Mentoring Program will formally conclude at the end of term 3 (in order to allow the year 12 students time to prepare for their final exams in term 4). Towards the end of the school year, a 'Completion Function' (dinner or other social occasion) would be held to mark the successful conclusion of the program to provide recognition for the students and mentors involved.

3.2.4 Phase 4 – Evaluation of Program

3.2.4.1 Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of evaluation is to confirm whether the Program is achieving its objectives and to gain information about how it can be improved. In particular, the pilot program during 2005 will be used to inform the future development and direction of the Mentoring Program.

3.2.4.2 Conduct of Evaluation

Evaluation will be organised by the School and GM&B Coordinators. All program participants will be involved in its evaluation. Information will be collected for the evaluation from written surveys and exit interviews with students and mentors.

3.2.4.3 Reporting of Evaluation

The School and GM&B Coordinators will report the results of the evaluation to the Principal and the GM&B before the end of the school year. This report will include an assessment of achievement of the Program against its objectives, of whether the objectives are still appropriate, and recommendations for future development, for the Principal's consideration.

4 Policy Framework

4.1 Responsibilities

Students and Mentors. Both students and mentors acknowledge that they voluntarily enter into the relationship on the mutual understanding that each will use their best endeavours to complete the program in accordance with the Mentoring Program Plan. Each will ensure that they will act honourably, courteously and fairly towards each other and are punctual and reliable in attending scheduled meetings and the conduct of the program. In the event that either of them is likely to be indisposed and unable to attend a scheduled meeting they will notify the other at the earliest possible time, so that a meeting may be re-scheduled.

Parents. Whilst the relationship between the mentor and student is a private relationship, the parties acknowledge that the student is always at liberty to discuss with his parent(s) any aspect of the Mentoring Program. In the event that a parent is concerned about the administration of the program such parent is at liberty to raise any matter with the School Program Co-ordinator who may discuss the matter with the student, the mentor and or the GM&B Mentor Co-ordinator. In the event that a parent is not satisfied that a matter raised has been properly addressed such parent may make a formal complaint.

Complaints. Any formal complaint by any participant in respect of the program must be made in writing to the Principal and a copy will be provided to the School Program Co-ordinator.

4.2 Confidentiality and Privacy

Successful mentoring depends primarily on a trusting relationship between the student and the mentor. The basic premise of such a relationship is that information shared in confidence between student and mentor will be kept in confidence. However, mentors will be required to temper this premise with their Duty of Care as explained below.

4.3 Insurance

Mentoring activities will be classed as approved school activities which will therefore be covered by existing Department of Education insurance arrangements.

4.4 Duty of Care

The Principal has ultimate responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of students while engaged in school-community activities, including this Mentoring Program. Measures such as the procedures, guidelines and screening of mentors described in this plan are included to support the Principal in exercising this duty of care to the participating students.

Mentors have a duty of care for the safety and well-being of the students they are mentoring. This duty of care overrides the confidentiality and privacy guidance at 4.2 above. If at any time a mentor believes their student is at risk of any kind of harm (physical, emotional, psychological or any other harm) they are obligated to notify the School Program Coordinator of their concerns.

The School Coordinator will be responsible for determining what further action should be taken. Mentor training will include instruction on understanding adolescents, suicide awareness, and alcohol and drug abuse. However, it is acknowledged that most mentors will not be qualified counsellors. Common sense and sound judgement will need to be applied, with the safety and well-being of the students involved being the paramount concern and guiding principle.

4.5 Unacceptable Behaviour

It is assumed that the high calibre of students and mentors that will be attracted to this Program will ensure that incidents of unacceptable behaviour are rare in the extreme. However, in the best interests of everyone involved, it is important to highlight to all participants that the following types of behaviour are unacceptable:

- Students under the age of 18 consuming alcohol or smoking during mentoring activities;
- Inappropriate language or behaviour by mentors or students (for example racist, sexist or other forms of discriminatory, harassing or belittling language or behaviour);
- Inappropriate physical contact (a 'no touching' rule applies between mentors and students)
- Mentors conducting any mentoring activities with students without parental knowledge and consent.

4.6 'Get Out' Provisions – Re-matching or Withdrawal

Participation in the program involves both the students and the mentors making a commitment to complete the 12 month program and it is hoped that in normal circumstances, both parties will see it through. However, the Mentoring Program is voluntary; either the student or the mentor may withdraw at anytime, with no detriment. Provisions will be made for voluntary re-matching in instances where the student-mentor relationship is just not working or where a mentor or student withdraws for other reasons, such as illness, work commitments or travel. The alternative to re-matching is withdrawal from the Program. The School and GM&B coordinators will be responsible for administering re-matchings or withdrawals from the Program.

4.7 Future Contacts Between Mentors and Students

After exiting the Mentoring Program, any future contact between students and mentors would occur in a purely private capacity, and is not covered by the scope of this Program. Both students and mentors would need to understand before entering the Program that such contact is optional and not expected, in order to avoid anyone feeling let-down after its completion.

5 Administration and Logistic Support

5.1 Program Coordinators

The Melbourne High School Mentoring Program will be routinely administered by two coordinators as follows:

- **School Coordinator** – Appointed by the Principal. Leads the Mentoring Program. The school's point of contact for all matters relating to the students and the conduct of the Program.
- **GM&B Coordinator** – Appointed by the GM&B. Supports the School Coordinator in the conduct of the Program. The Old Boys Association point of contact for all matters relating to the mentors and the on-going support of mentors.

5.2 Funding and Resource Requirements

The Melbourne High School Mentoring Program will be run largely on good will and its funding and resource requirements will be modest. However, some resource allocation is obviously required for the Program to be run successfully. For the pilot program in 2005, indicative resource requirements are:

School Resources:

- School Coordinator (on a part-time basis) – estimate an average of two hours per week required for six students participating in the pilot program during 2005. A willing volunteer – enthusiastic, organised and with good people skills.
- Facilities – use of school library, classrooms or other locations in the school grounds after hours as a place for students and mentors to meet.
- Printing and Publishing Support – use of school resources for limited publishing support for mentoring program documents.
- MHS Careers Teacher – advice and if possible participation in mentor training and other career guidance activities.
- MHS Student Welfare Co-ordinator – Advice to School Co-ordinator on selection of students and possible participation in mentor training.

GM&S Resources:

- GM&B Coordinator – unpaid volunteer.
- Mentors – unpaid volunteers.
- Funding - Limited sponsorship / financial support for 'get to know you' activities (eg catering support), morning teas, and the Exit Dinner.

6 Control and Communications

6.1 Executive Control

The Principal of Melbourne High School retains executive control of the Melbourne High School Mentoring Program at all times.

The GM&B will support and jointly sponsor the Program. It will provide the mentors, a mentor coordinator and other resources.

6.2 Periodic Review

The Mentoring Program will include periodic review points as follows:

- Initial check-up, one month after sign-up (GM&B coord to contact mentors, School Coord to speak to students)
- Bi-monthly review (GM&B coord to contact mentors, School Coord to speak to students. GM&B Mentoring Committee and School Coord meet to review progress)
- Annual Review (as a result of formal evaluation conducted at the end of the 12 month program).

6.3 Public Relations and Communication Plan

It is important that the Mentoring Program is recognised and celebrated in the school. The School and GM&B coordinators will be responsible for promotion of the program and communicating its achievements. It is envisaged that communication and recognition means that may be used include:

- A 'launch' announcement after the pilot program commences in Feb 05, to be published in the School's weekly newsletter "Ours", and the MHSOBA monthly newsletter, 'The Old Unicornian'.
- Short updates and stories during the conduct of the pilot program.
- A 'Completion' or 'Exit' Function at the end of the pilot program, including the presentation of certificates of completion and appreciation.
- Highlighting the achievements of the program in the annual school report and at Speech Night.

7 Conclusion

The aim of this initiative is for Melbourne High School to provide **career guidance and personal development** for selected students through a formal mentoring program in conjunction with the Green, Maroon and Black Patrons Club of the Melbourne High School Old Boys Association.

The goals of the Melbourne High School Mentoring Program are to:

- Provide career guidance to students,
- Encourage personal development of students,
- Promote school-community links, and
- Further demonstrate the value of the MHSOBA through the GM&B to the school.

The Mentoring Program seeks to reinforce and promote the ethos of the School, encapsulated in the School motto, 'Honour the Work'. The Program aims to complement and support other career guidance programs supported by the School, not replace them.

The philosophy guiding the Program is that it is to be school-based, voluntary, and driven by the needs of selected students. The School will retain overall control of the program at all times. Parental consent is required for all students. The GM&B will support the program particularly in providing suitable mentors from the Old Boy community. The Program has defined objectives, responsibilities, and entry and exit points.

The mentoring model selected is a formal, one-to-one, long term (12 month), program with a series of focussed, guided activities and review points.

This plan has outlined the development and implementation of the Melbourne High School Mentoring Program, commencing with a pilot program in 2005. The plan is to start small, with a target of six Year 12 students participating in the pilot program, then build on success in subsequent years.

The plan outlines a policy framework and support arrangements. However more work is required to prepare guidelines and procedures for the conduct of the Mentoring Program. It is planned to prepare these progressively as the pilot program proceeds.

The success of the Mentoring Program will ultimately depend on the commitment, dedication, enthusiasm and generosity of those involved. It promises to be a rewarding experience for all participants.

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