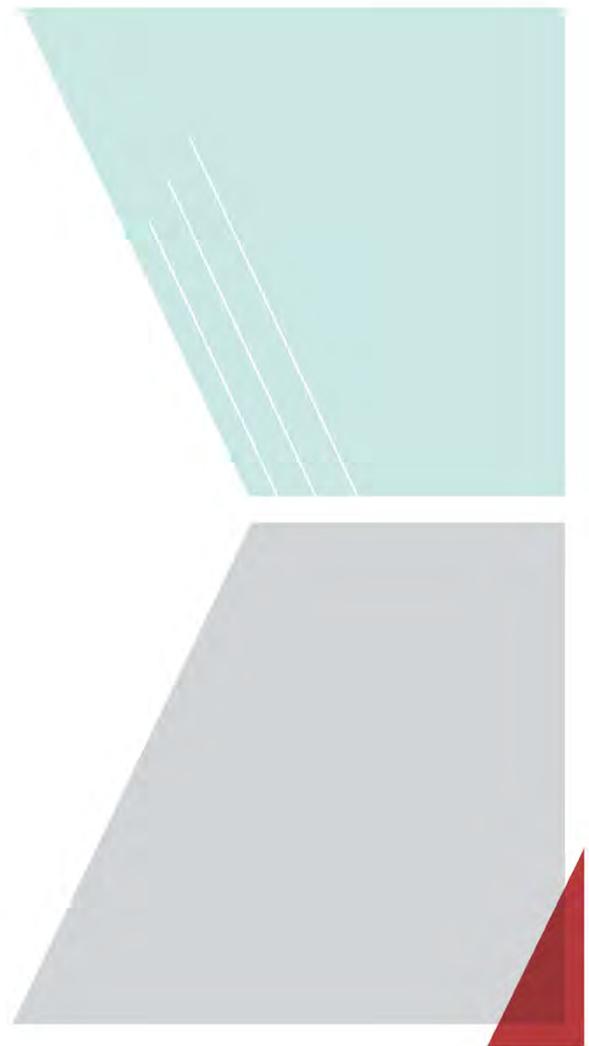


SHEPPARTON EDUCATION PLAN

Frequently Asked Questions

September, 2019

www.schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au



Background

Why are we seeing such big changes to Shepparton's high schools?

The teaching staff in the Greater Shepparton area have been doing their best but over many years the results in the region have been getting worse.

The four secondary schools in Greater Shepparton have previously worked together in a “**Better Together Alliance**”. However, this has not resulted in the educational improvements and student experience that young people need.

Making only minor changes, or a few upgrades to the existing schools, would not make enough of a difference needed to see better education outcomes for secondary students in Greater Shepparton.

The School

Greater Shepparton College (interim name) will provide students with more pathway options and learning opportunities. Each pathway (such as technology, arts/design, construction, hospitality or business) will prepare students to successfully move to further education, training and long-term work.

While there will be more academic pathways, there will also be more practical learning opportunities, such as “**experiences of work**” placements, learning-focused excursions, and leadership and public speaking programs.

From 2020, the new leadership team of principals will be integral to the development of the new school. The team brings passion and leadership experience to their roles. They have strong local knowledge and are committed to providing high-quality educational outcomes for every young person in Greater Shepparton.

Led by Executive Principal Genevieve Simson, the team is:

- John Sciacca (Principal, McGuire Campus): Mr Sciacca has been principal of Nathalia Secondary College for nine years, with previous experience teaching in Greater Shepparton secondary schools. His focus is on improving student pathways through enhanced literacy and numeracy skills, and he has strong community engagement skills.
- Stephen Bolton (Principal, Mooroopna Campus): Mr Bolton is the current principal Mooroopna Secondary College. He will be heavily involved in implementing a specialist curriculum for Year 9 students next year, with a focus on inquiry-based and experiential learning, student resilience, sense of community, and career planning.
- Ken Murray (Principal, Wanganui Park Campus): Mr Murray is the current principal of Wanganui Park Secondary College. He will bring leadership skills and knowledge of the Greater Shepparton community to play a key role in the **development of the new school's** student health and wellbeing approach.
- Megan Michalaidis (Assistant Principal, Teaching and Learning). Ms Michalaidis is the current assistant principal at McGuire College. She will bring her expertise in curriculum and instructional design, and will work across the three campuses to lead and shape the new school's **teaching and learning strategy**.

House Model

To ensure that the school doesn't feel too big for the students, it will work by providing a kind of mini-school, within a school. So there will be three "Neighbourhoods", each of which in turn is divided into three small 'Houses". It will be their house that students belong to and these will offer a much smaller environment in which students across all year levels can get to know one another.

Whilst students will generally be in the same house as their siblings, parents and students can talk to the school about finding a house that is right for their individual needs. The house model gives the school the flexibility to ensure that every student belongs to the house that is right for them. For some students, this means that they might need to try more than one house, before they feel at home.

The house model will begin from 2020.

How will the new house model work?

Students will begin each day in their house. Approximately 50 students from each year level will be allocated to a house. Teachers will be assigned to each house, with their Learning Mentor group being within their house. All regular classes will remain with approximately 25 students.

Students in Year 7 and 8 will attend most classes with students in their Learning Mentor and House Groups. As students move into Year 9 and the senior years, they will still begin each day in their Learning Mentor group within the house, but will begin to attend classes with students from other houses.

Senior students in Years 11 and 12 will move around the campus more to access the specialist facilities, whether in science, food technology, music or whatever they choose.

Students will also be able to engage with students from other houses through extra-curricular activities, shared lunch and recess breaks, sporting events and in more senior levels, shared subjects.

Students will be allocated a learning mentor, who will track their learning progress and be the main point of contact for parents or guardians.

Students with special needs/Inclusion

The Department and school leadership team are working closely to ensure that students with special needs are appropriately supported at Greater Shepparton College (interim name).

Our focus is ensuring the right teaching and specialist staff are available for our students and we will collaborate closely with a number of educational partners to embed a culture of inclusion and ensure all students are provided with the support that is needed.

Site Selection

Why was the Shepparton High School site selected as the chosen new school site?

The Shepparton High School site is the most central location for all young people in the Shepparton and Mooroopna region, and located in easy walking distance from Latrobe University, GoTAFE and the centre of town.

Its selection followed a site assessment process undertaken by external and independent consultants that looked at locations, transport, accessibility, cost and connectivity across a number of sites. The school site is the largest site of the four current school sites.

Design

What will the secondary school look like?

The Greater Shepparton College (interim name) will feature an Enterprise and Innovation Centre, providing a central heart for the school and as a welcome centre for the broader community. The school will feature arts, science, food/hospitality and technology spaces, as well as dedicated spaces for physical education, health and wellbeing.

The Centre will connect to three surrounding 'neighbourhood' buildings. Each neighbourhood will feature three 'Houses', a learning resource centre, canteen and, student support and wellbeing services as well as an atrium with tiered seating for group gatherings.

The school will also have an innovation hub for students to gain practical experience in science and robotics, and a state-of-the-art performing arts centre so performing arts students can display their talents.

For more information on the school designs as well as a fly-through video of the school site, please visit www.greatersheppartoncollege.vic.edu.au/

Was the community consulted on the designs?

The Victorian School Building Authority and the designing Architects met with approximately 70 staff from across the four current secondary schools and participated in visits to a number of educational facilities across the state to see what cutting edge educational facilities look like and how they are used to drive student learning.

Were cultural references to the local indigenous community considered?

The design has incorporated landscaping that is culturally sensitive with a focus on native plants.

The Department consulted with a number of local groups including Aboriginal community leaders and the education support team in regards to the design.

Cultural inclusivity will be a key element of the One School for Everyone.

Funding

Will there be funding to build the new school?

Funding for initiatives of this scale are usually provided over multiple stages rather than years before construction starts.

Both the Premier and the Minister for Education have reaffirmed the government's commitment to fully fund this project through future budgets.

The \$21.5 million provided for the Shepparton Education Plan through the 2017-18 and 2018-19 State Budgets is an initial investment. This funding has allowed for the design, development and site preparation works for Greater Shepparton College (interim name) on the Shepparton High site to take place, as well as design and construction of the Integrated Early Learning Centre at Mooroopna Primary School.

Transport

How will traffic management and student safety be monitored when the new school is built?

The highest priority for the Department is the safety of all students travelling to and from school. We want to ensure a smooth transition that minimises any impacts on students and their families.

The Greater Shepparton City Council is undertaking traffic management studies to establish the key areas of focus for road works over the coming years to address all traffic issues. The Department will consult with Council and VicRoads to discuss appropriate pick-up and drop off zones and school crossings. There is provision for onsite car parking for staff.

Architects have designed the new campus to minimise the impact of school traffic for local residents. There will be a separate entry for staff parking on the school grounds. There will be a large bus drop-off zone, also on school land, with capacity for eight buses. For students and staff who are able to ride their bikes to school, there will be two secure storage cages either end of the site and bike hoops next to each 'house'.

What are the travel arrangements during transition?

From the 2020 school year, free travel assistance will be provided to students that attend the Greater Shepparton College (interim name). Free travel assistance will enable students to travel to and from the campus they attend, until the school opens on a single campus.

Transport arrangements for students attending other schools in Shepparton, including Verney Road School, government primary schools and non-government schools, will remain largely unchanged.

There will be some bus timetable changes for 2020, and any such changes will be communicated to families before the end of the 2019 school year.

Schools will notify families of student's bus allocations in Term 4, 2019. The school will make arrangements to have available a public transport ticket for eligible students to use in 2020. The cost of this ticket will be covered by the conveyance allowance.

For more information please visit www.greatersheppartoncollege.vic.edu.au/college-life/transport

Uniform

Will students have to buy a new uniform?

All students will be in the new uniform for the start of 2020. This is an important way for them to come together rather than feeling like they are all from different schools. Over time it will also help build a school identity and pride in their school. A committee, with student and parent representatives, have worked with the four current secondary school councils to develop the uniform.

Each student will receive a \$200 voucher they can redeem at local uniform suppliers for summer and sports uniforms. Families will receive the voucher for each enrolled child for redemption from one of the following uniform retailers:

- Supplier 1: [School Uniform Shop, 183 Corio Street, Shepparton]
- Supplier 2: [Shepparton School Uniforms, 55 High Street, Shepparton – formerly Goulburn Valley School Uniforms]
- Supplier 3: [Quality Teams, 25-27 Benalla Road, Shepparton]

The uniform is designed to be inclusive, and the blazer and tie will be optional for students.

The amount on the voucher is the maximum value of SSR's contribution through this voucher process, and is to be used for the purchase of summer uniform and sports uniform items.

Additionally, eligible families can access SSR support for the purchase of other uniform items. Details about eligibility can be found at www.ssr.net.au.

Wanganui Year 12 students do not currently wear school uniform – will they have to?

From 2020, all Year 12 students will have a uniform option to wear that will comprise of:

- School uniform pants or shorts (charcoal) or school uniform dress
- Commemorative short or long sleeve polo top in school colours (teal, charcoal, white with highlights of orange if desired)
- Bomber jacket in school colours (teal, charcoal, white with highlights of orange if desired)
- Black leather shoes and socks

Students may submit suggested designs to their Principal before the first day of Term 4.

Teaching and Learning

What will the school day look like for students?

From 2020, the school will move to 70 minute periods to enable depth in learning and reduce the frequency of student movement and distractions. There will be 4 x 70 minutes periods per day. Initial indication from the school is that there will be 2 x periods, recess, 1 x period, lunch, and 1 x period, home.

What will the new school offer kids next year?

Year 7

The year 7 curriculum will have a dedicated focus on Literacy and Numeracy, with additional sessions focused on English and Mathematics. Students will also study Humanities, Science, LOTE, PE, Arts and Technology subjects. Each semester, Year 7 students will have a Quest in Humanities and Science, which allows students to investigate real world applications of these subjects. As part of the Learning Mentor program, students will be taught organisational and study skills to assist in their transition to secondary school.

Year 8

For next year, the curriculum at the Mooroopna and McGuire campus will remain the same. The curriculum at the Wanganui Campus will be a combination of the curriculum offered currently at Wanganui and Shepparton High. A dedicated review of the Year 8 curriculum will happen in 2020.

Year 9 Specialist Curriculum

We are currently developing specialist curriculum for year 9 at the Mooroopna campus. The program will focus on supporting inquiry/ hands-on learning, self- development, resilience, self-determination, experiences of work programs, sense of community, and student leadership.

Core subjects will be delivered – English, Mathematics, Humanities, Health/Physical Education and Science.

Eight (8) electives will be undertaken by students, four each semester.

The Year 9 curriculum focus on careers will also introduce the Department of Education and Training's "My Career Portfolio", an online portfolio designed to support students with resources for their career goals and education pathways.

Teachers from the four existing secondary schools provided over 100 suggestions to the New School Learning Design Team for Year 9 elective subjects, which are being reviewed by school leaders at the moment. Input from local industry and employers also forms part of the design of elective subjects, which is great for students.

A Year 9 (2020) subject handbook will be provided to current Year 8 students early in Term 4. A subject selection 'expo' will be held at the Mooroopna Campus during Term 4.

Year 10

Year 10 will be offered at 3 campuses next year - McGuire, Mooroopna and Wanganui Park. Students will be involved in further development of their individual Career Action Plans, and will select subjects based on their desired pathway. Careers-based activities will also be a feature for Year 10 students (e.g. experiences of work). Course counselling sessions will be available to all students. Students (and parents) will all be invited to a session with a Career Consultant to discuss pathways options based on the Morrisby Online Careers Assessment Tool. Fast tracking opportunities will be available; Year 9 students are encouraged to talk to their current teachers about whether they are ready to fast track a VCE subject next year. A range of leadership opportunities will be available, e.g. The BEACON program and peer leadership program. The Year 10 Subject Handbook will be available mid Term 4

Year 11 and 12

All VCE subjects will be offered and VCAL subjects will be offered at both the McGuire & Wanganui Park Campuses in 2020. McGuire and Wanganui Park students will stay at their current campus. Shepparton High Students will move to the Wanganui Park campus. Mooroopna students may go to either campus depending on their subject and pathway choices. All students will choose either a VCE or VCAL pathway, and further extension is an option through VCE Plus and VET programs. The senior pathways handbook is currently being finalised. This will be distributed at information sessions for senior students.

What else will be offered?

Student camps

Camps will be in place in 2020 for Years 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12. No camp is proposed for Year 11 next year. These camps won't be specific subject camps.

The Year 7 camp will be in Term 1, 2020 to Howqua. The Year 9 camp will be in Term 1, 2020 at PGL Adventure Camp Campaspe Downs at Kyneton. A number of subject camps for Year 9 will be offered as well.

The Year 12 camp will be around pathways, including visits to Universities – and are available for VCE and VCAL students.

Specialist Koorie curriculum

The Kaiela Dhungala First People's Curriculum (developed in Greater Shepparton) will be implemented within the new school and interwoven across curriculum areas.

All students will also have the opportunity to learn about the cultures, histories and knowledge of the Goulburn Murray region's Indigenous people through the Kaiela Dhungala First People's Curriculum.

Literacy and Numeracy

There will be a focus on literacy and numeracy, with extra time devoted to these classes to build skills of students, with curriculum designed to challenge and support students to further develop and improve.

What programs will be available for gifted children?

Greater Shepparton College (interim name) will provide new opportunities and specialised support for all students, including gifted students. The school will offer an unprecedented choice for every child to explore their passions and open pathways for the jobs of the future.

Students who are gifted and talented will be supported in a number of ways. They will have access to wider subject choice as well as options to extend their learning in core and elective subjects for those who want to challenge themselves. There will also be opportunities for Year 10 students to fast track into VCE.

Gifted students at Year 7 & 8 will be offered extension through the core curriculum. This means that they will be doing higher level work within their normal class, which is set by the teacher.

In addition they will be participating in Readers and Writers Workshops that are more cognitively demanding. At year 9 there will be extension units offered as part of the electives, as well as extension within core subjects.

What programs will be available for children that struggle in a main stream high school in the coming years?

Greater Shepparton College (interim name) will provide new opportunities and specialised support for all students, including those who have faced challenges in mainstream schools.

Students who receive additional wellbeing support at their current school will be equally or more supported at the new school. Current staff are working with primary schools and current secondary schools to achieve this.

From next year, each student will be assigned a learning mentor from Year 7, who will be the first point of contact for parents and care-givers to discuss any concerns, including about their child's health and wellbeing, throughout their time at our school.

Wellbeing and Support

How will the safety and wellbeing of students be looked after?

Greater Shepparton College (interim name) has a zero tolerance stance on bullying, racism and discrimination, and has processes in place to deal with it in line with their anti-bullying policy.

A Bullying Prevention Policy has been developed for the new school and has been endorsed by the four (4) existing school councils. The Bullying Prevention Policy is available from the new school website.

<https://www.greatersheppartoncollege.vic.edu.au/policies/23-bullying-prevention-policy-02082019/file>

This policy will be implemented and will be in place ready for the start of 2020.

The college will implement school-wide positive behaviour strategies and teach all students these expectations including the School-Wide Positive Behaviours (SWPB) program.

This program focuses on prevention and early intervention by:

- Supporting effective learning through the development of a positive, calm, and welcoming environment
- Teaching and modelling socially acceptable behaviours
- Creating a positive school climate, that values achievement and rewards students
- Openly responding to the needs of school leaders, staff, students, parents and carers
- Actively promoting and maintaining a safe, respectful and orderly learning environment for all students and staff

What health and wellbeing options are in place for students?

Wellbeing is an essential foundation for Greater Shepparton College (interim name) and the school is looking at multiple options to support students, including:

- Wellbeing staff will work on each campus to provide support for students and families. In 2020, the student support provided by Health and Wellbeing staff will be based on the best practices from within the current four schools.
- Students who currently receive support from health & wellbeing staff in the schools, or DET staff will continue to receive this support. At the beginning of Year 7, each student will be assigned a Learning Mentor. Each Learning Mentor will have a small group of students to support, and will monitor students' learning progress and wellbeing. They will work to build each student's skills in organisation, goal setting and pathway planning.
- The Learning Mentor will also be the first point of contact for parents and caregivers.

Communication

How will parents be receive information from the **school once it's begun?**

The school's formal communication with parents and carers will be via Compass.

Compass is an online portal and learning management system that can be downloaded at no charge to mobile devices or tablets. It is a two-way communication system between parents and teachers; students and teachers; and school and parents. Attendance, student alerts, homework, student reports and a calendar of events will be available.

How to do I keep updated on what is happening?

The Greater Shepparton College (interim name) provides regular information updates via their website, via school newsletters, and regular small group sessions at each school campus to enable conversation.

For all the latest updates on transition days, campus meet and greets and next steps, visit www.greatersheppartoncollege.vic.edu.au