



NOVEMBER 2010

Official Newsletter of

Regional Development Australia—Central Coast NSW Inc.

November

Forum

EDUCATION

-

**CENTRAL
COAST
LEARNING
BOARD**

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Why a Learning Board?

Increased levels of education correlate positively with increased levels of prosperity and increased innovation in a community

The higher your level of education the more you will generally earn in a life time.

Economists can put a figure on this and at the moment for young people leaving school in 2010, based on today's wages their current indications are that someone with a university degree will earn more than a million dollars more than someone who doesn't get that degree.

If you do become unemployed the period of unemployment is likely to be much less than someone whose educational level is lower than yours. The higher your level of education the healthier you are likely to be.

The more educated you are, the less likely you are to be incarcerated. It costs \$100 000 a year to keep someone in jail and about \$50 000 a year for someone to get a medical degree – tuition and cost of living included!

You are also less likely to be homeless, require treatment for major addictions.

On all social indicators increasing your levels of education improves your life...

Melton Shire Council established the Melton Education Board in 1998 to foster a community culture that encourages the continuity of learning at all age levels and provides world class learning opportunities for all residents and sectors of the Shire.

In 2004 Council changed the name to the Shire of Melton Community Learning Board to reflect the increased focus on learning across the whole community.

The Shire of Melton Community Learning Board, on behalf of Council, will:

* Promote the development of the Shire of

Melton as a Learning Community

* Work cooperatively with the tertiary education sector (in particular Victoria University) and the private sector to promote and expand the range of courses and facilities at the Melton Campus

* Aim for the provision of pre-school, school, tertiary and adult and community education levels that reflect the needs of the community

* Advocate, where appropriate, for increased funding and resources for pre-school, primary, secondary, and special education

* Increase adult education, employment and training opportunities in the municipality

* Develop and maintain a Community Education Plan

* Review access to education within the municipality

* Link economic development to vocational education

* Establish collaborative structures and mechanisms between schools and relevant community services, which support young people and their families.

* Members of the Shire of Melton Community Learning Board are representative of all sectors of the broader communities within the Shire of Melton.

Maree Roberts
Deputy Regional Director,
Hunter Central Coast Region,
Department of Education & Training
RDACC Deputy Chair

Wyong Shire Lifelong Learning Strategy

Wyong Shire Council is currently undertaking research to develop a Lifelong Learning Strategy. The research will be undertaken during the 2010/11 financial year with the Strategy to be developed in the 2011/12 financial year.

Education is seen as an investment in the economic and social sustainability of the Shire. Skills and knowledge of the community contribute to both its social and economic strengths. A more highly educated community will create income generating opportunities for itself through innovation and creativity as well as generating employment opportunities from the range of businesses attracted by the skilled workforce.

It will have a positive impact on the Shire's social fabric, via improvements in community participation and health.

Education also includes lifelong learning opportunities, through participation in community groups and activities and recognition of the broader learning needs in the community, for example, academic, vocational, environmental or social.

Belinda McRobie
Social Planner—Future Planning
Wyong Shire Council



Where to from here?

This forum has proved there is overwhelming support for the establishment of a Learning Board. The 40 plus attendees put forward views and ideas on the structure and purpose of such a Board for the Central Coast.

The next tasks will include:

- * Meet with both councils and get a commitment from them
- * Jointly do an Expression of Interest out to the community to serve on the board
- * Ensure consultation with all stakeholders with a view to who should chair the board
- * Convene a meeting with key stakeholders to consider education and learning in its broader sense and incorporates the needs of the region.



Q & A

Each Focus on the Coast forum gives the community the opportunity to ask questions of the presenters and other members of the forum. Some of the questions and answers are printed in our newsletter. For all questions and answers from the forum please visit our website www.rdacc.org.au

What steps can a learning board and its partners (such as the University and TAFE) take to enable and encourage women in learning, given the related problems of poverty, childcare and nursing mothers?

The University of Newcastle is committed to providing an accessible, supportive and flexible environment for all staff and students, including those with family responsibilities.

The University recognises that:

- * Family responsibilities impact on all aspects of an individual's life and are not confined to the 'private' sphere
- * Family responsibilities affect both women and men
- * Families are diverse
- * Students and staff should have access to the same educational and employment conditions regardless of their family responsibilities
- * Leave and benefits should be reasonably provided to accommodate the roles of students and staff with respect to these family or carer responsibilities
- * The provision of on campus child care is a crucial element in allowing staff and students to meet their parenting responsibilities

The University of Newcastle leads the sector in providing educational opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds.

The University offers a range of Foundation courses to provide knowledge and skills to be successful at tertiary study.

The University also provides a range of student services including counselling, assistance with accommodation, disability services, health services, mentor program, indigenous student support and development, loans and welfare, and a range of study support programs.

Catharina Boer
University of Newcastle

More training for younger persons who do not wish to proceed to higher education such as the Wyoming project.

A Regional Learning Board would have a strategic role to identify areas that require specific focus and would bring together parties who could help achieve those targets. Training for youth is of significant interest to this community.

Maree Roberts
Dept of Education & Training
RDACC Deputy Chair

At what level would a "Learning Board" operate e.g. strategic, lobbying, project/programme delivery?

All or any of the above. This community should determine what we want from a Learning Board and

then structure and resource it to provide what we want. Other communities have already grappled with this and have made their own decisions about what it means to be a learning community.

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<http://www.melton.vic.gov.au/page/page.asp?pageId=282>

The Hume Global Learning Village (HGLV) network combines the collective resources of its 700+ membership of individuals and organisations to improve learning opportunities for the entire Hume community.

[http://www.hume.vic.gov.au/Libraries/Learning/Hume Global Learning Village/About the HGLV](http://www.hume.vic.gov.au/Libraries/Learning/Hume%20Global%20Learning%20Village/About%20the%20HGLV)

Maree Roberts
Dept of Education & Training
RDACC Deputy Chair



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FOCUS ON REGIONAL COMMUNITIES

Regional Development Australia Central Coast (RDACC) is facilitating Focus on the Coast forums to provide local residents with the opportunity to participate in a consultative process that identifies priorities, aligns resources and promotes solutions. These forums will enable the community to provide input to governments about issues and opportunities in our local area.

FUTURE FORUMS

17 February 2011

Indigenous Forum

17 March 2011

TBA

21 April 2011

TBA

19 May 2011

TBA

To register your interest call Elizabeth Westrup on 4349 4949
or email elizabeth.westrup@rdacc.org.au