









STUDENT LEADERS PROGRAM

Shaping the future of school sport in Victoria

2022

STUDENT LEADERS 2022



School Sport Victoria (SSV) established the 'Student Leaders' in 2022 with the aim to provide feedback and advice to help guide and shape the future of school sport.

In line with the Strategic Directions 2020 to 2030, School Sport Victoria is committed to listening to students to help inform the design and delivery of school sport to maximise participation.

In establishing the Student Leaders, SSV was overwhelmed with the quantity and quality of nominations with more than 100 Victorian students submitting a nomination; clear evidence of the willingness and enthusiasm of Victorian students to contribute to informing school sport in Victoria.

Twenty two students, from year 5 - 12, were selected as the inaugural members, representing great diversity in terms of their gender, abilities, background and geographical location in Victoria.



The diversity of the group was important, as students brought their personal experiences and opinions to the group discussions. Students sought the opinion of their peers from their school to share during the group discussions.

SSV thanks this trailblazing cohort of students for their contribution, enthusiasm, and leadership. They have informed new elements to the program, such as a Student Leaders badge which is awarded to each student selected for the program.

School Sport Victoria is excited to share this summary of the learning and outcomes from the Student Leaders Group from 2022, and how this is informing the work of School Sport Victoria into the future.

STUDENT LEADERS 2022



Each student was supported by a teacher mentor (a nominated teacher from their school) to assist with both gathering feedback from peers and their participation in the program.

The group met twice a term to engage in group discussions on four key themes:

- 1. **Exploring Sports:** that will engage more students to participate in both competitive and non-competitive school sport
- 2. **Design a Participation Activity**: to design a new non-competitive sport, physical activity program
- 3. **A Positive Experience:** making the school sport experience enjoyable and welcoming for all students
- 4. Knocking Down Barriers: to sport that are often experienced by students

The SSV Student Leaders were privileged to have **Ellie Cole** and **Brad Marais** as the facilitators who have lived experience in school and elite sport. Ellie and Brad were engaging, encouraging, and provided a safe and welcoming environment for the students to discuss the themes and provide feedback.



THEME 1 Exploring Sports



This theme saw students explore sports that would engage students to participate in school sport.

This included sports that students would like to participate in as interschool sport competitions and non-competitive participation programs.

Students considered their own experience and interest in playing sports, as well as collecting information from fellow students on sports they would likely participate in.

Students shared their findings on the top 15 sports that they had identified, for both interschool sport competitions and non-competitive participation programs, which informed a collective list of sports most commonly identified by the group.

The key sports identified by the students are summarised below.

Primary School	Secondary School

Competitive (interschool) sports

Interschool sport competitions provide opportunities for students to represent their school and participate amongst students from other schools. Interschool sport provides a pathway where school teams and individual students can to progress from local competitions through to State Championships.

Emphasis on

- Participation
- Getting more students involved

- Providing a balance between 'main sports' and 'niche sports' to engage students
- Consideration of local facilities/ interests (eg: access to beaches)

Sports most commonly identified

- Australian football •
- Baseball
- Basketball
- Cricket
- Hockey
- NFL
- Rugby
- Softball
- Table tennis Tee-hall
- Football (soccer)
- Tennis
- Netball Volleyball

- Athletics/track and field •
- Australian football
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Cricket
- Cross country
- Cycling
- Football (soccer)
- Netball
- Rowing
- Softball
- Surfing
- Swimming Table tennis
- **Tennis**
- Volleyball

New sports identified

(Sports not currently offered within School Sport Victoria's interschool sport program at primary or secondary level)

- Badminton
- Baseball
- Handball
- NFL
- Table tennis
- Tag rugby
- Ultimate frisby

- Boxing
- Dance
- Dodgeball
- Chess
- Fencing
- Gaelic football
- Go kart

- Ice hockey
- Shooting
- Skiing
- Synchronised swimming



THEME 1 Exploring Sports



Primary School Secondary School

Non-competitive (participation) sports

Sports where the emphasis is on providing the opportunity for students to play the sport or activity, that is in a non-

competitive format and has a focus on participation. **Emphasis** on Outdoor / adventure sports, including those that student may have Participation experienced on school camp Getting more students involved Emerging activities (eg: esports) Trying a new activity Sports/activities identified Archery Archery / darts Quiddich **Badminton** Beach sports / activities Rock climbing Bowling Running / cross country Races (egg and spoon, sack races) Boxing Scuba diving Skateboarding Cycling / mountain biking Skateboarding Swimming Dancing Skipping Surfing Dodgeball Surfing Downball Tag / Laser tag Equestrian Team sports – lacrosse, football Golf / mini golf (soccer), tee ball Ice Skating / Roller Skating / Video game sports / e-sports Roller Blading

Informing school sports offered through School Sport Victoria

As part of its Strategic Directions 2020 to 2030, School Sport Victoria is seeking to enable student participation in a variety of sports, including providing social/non-competitive alongside competitive sport formats.

The input from students on competitive sports is being considered by School Sport Victoria to inform its **future** interschool sport program, including any new sport(s) that should be included in the program.

In 2022, School Sport Victoria launched SSV Play, which aims to engage less active students and those not currently participating in interschool sport, through providing a range of activities that are non-competitive and focus on participation.

The feedback from students on non-competitive sports has re-affirmed the activities offered through SSV Play, in particular skateboarding, as well as provided consideration for **new activities** to be offered into the future.





THEME 2 Design Participation Activity



This theme saw students design a participation activity for the <u>SSV Play</u>, program. The activities focused on **maximising student participation**, with **less focus on competition**.

Students were challenged with designing the delivery of a participation program for one of the following activities. These activities were informed through the feedback from students on 'exploring sports' (theme 1):

- Tag, such as a version of touch football or laser tag
- 2. Bowling, including outdoor or indoor
- 3. Dance
- 4. Aerobics, which could include other group fitness, such as boot camp
- 5. Parkour, which may also include some ninja activity
- 6. Down ball

- 7. Target sports, such as archery or darts
- 8. Hula hoop
- 9. Gymnastics or gym activities
- 10. Martial arts, which could include selfdefence and non-contact martial arts
- 11. Sport program, with a non-competitive format
- 12. Quidditch.

Students were asked to consider key elements to the program delivery, including equipment, venue, delivery format and any travel requirements. A worksheet was provided to students to assist in informing the design of their participation program and in presenting their programs to the group.

The key considerations identified by the students in the design and delivery of a participation activity for students, is summarised below.

Program element	Key considerations	
Venue (where)	 In school or local to the school Select a suitable venue that is easily accessible within school grounds or local to the school. Note, that the choice of venues within regional areas may be limited. 	
Equipment	Limit equipment requirements Consider activities where the school already has the equipment or where there is limited equipment required.	
Deliverer (who)	 Be welcoming and inclusive for all students Ensure delivery of the activities are welcoming for students of all abilities. Consider whether it is best to be delivered as a whole of class activity or provide opportunities for students to sign up individually to participate. Consider grouping students into smaller groups or pairs when participating in the activity. Preference for in person delivery and by an external instructor, particularly for the first session. Where the program involves multiple sessions, then subsequent sessions could be delivered as either a video, virtually or led by a teacher or student (with appropriate training and support provided). 	
Delivery (how)	 Make it fun, creative and focus on developing skills Consider creative formats for activities, such as street style carnivals. Activities should be targeted towards skill development, growth, improvement and opportunities to socially participate with friends. Play music to create a positive atmosphere. Include students in the planning, organising and promoting the program. 	

THEME 2 Design Participation Activity



Program element	Key considerations	
Timing (when)	During school time Deliver activities during the school day, such as during class time (as a class activity) or lunch break.	
Promotion	 Talk to students and use school channels Promote in the school newsletter and through announcements at school assembly. Videos provide the opportunity to show examples of how students participate in the activities. Consider social media platforms with high engagement by students, such as Instagram. Consider diversity of students within the promotion, for example, showing all genders or different groups of students participating. Consider rewards system for participating. 	
	Communication to highlight and share what the students thought of the activity.	

Informing participation programs offered through School Sport Victoria

As part of its <u>Strategic Directions 2020 to 2030</u>, School Sport Victoria is seeking to develop innovative solutions to reduce barriers to participation by schools and students, including those less active.

The ideas presented on the design and delivery of non-competitive, participation activities, have been used to **inform new activities as part of the SSV Play program**. This included the introduction of the <u>SSV School Games program</u> in 2022 delivered to schools in Terms 3 and 4.

Students were also asked to present ideas to **inform an SSV Play logo**, which had an emphasis on participation and incorporated the SSV colours of red, blue and green into the logo design.





This theme had a focus on having a positive school sport experience.

This considered students' **participation in school sport events**, including whole of school sporting carnivals as well as interschool and interstate competitions, where they may be representing their school or Victoria.

Younger children want to play sport that is focused on fun, skill development, personal achievement and playing with friends.

Younger people (teenagers) are motivated by fitness, social experiences and skill development, while sport offered to them is often focused on ability, skill display and is often competition. As a result, some students are put off by the pressure to perform and win.

Students explored what is important to a positive experience and ideas for School Sport Victoria to consider to make students' experience at a school sport event a positive one.



Providing a positive experience can enable students to enjoy, engage and improve themselves as well as support students to continue to participate.

Conversely a poor experience can put a student off continuing to participate in sport.





What	is important to a positive school sport experience	Ideas to improve the school sport experience
	Pri	mary School
Community Focus	 Love whole of school events, which brings all students together and provides a chance to mix with students from other year levels Enjoy where parents can be part of events Where students were respectful of each other Events that were fun! 	 Family sports day to encourage students and parents to play together Include fun, participative activities at school sports events such as bean bag toss, nerf gun target shooting, basketball shooting, skipping groups Teachers to attend State events, to provide encouragement for students at this level Consider weekend events to enable parents to be able to attend (e.g region or state championship level events) Provide awards not just for students who win, but to recognise student participation as well Provide opportunities for students to be involved without playing, such as umpiring, coaching, setting up events, commentating, marshalling etc.
Meeting Students	 Enjoy meeting students from other schools their age at interschool sport events Good when get to socialise with others from other states 	 Create rivalry with other schools from outside of the region/city Select activities that maximise opportunities for students to participate with other schools
Fairness	 Enjoy it when students get to participate with others with similar: abilities and ages (year level) Having a choice of activities Participating with their gender group 	 Competitions where students are in the same age group or year level, as it's tough to compete against older students Alternatively, more focus on events with students at a similar skill level, rather than based on age groups/year levels
Rewarding personal achievement	Rewarding and acknowledging personal achievements/ bests rather than where a student/team finishes in an event	 Provide ribbons and medals for all, not just 1st, 2nd, 3rd place Rewards for personal bests achievements (e.g times) Awards to acknowledging a good performance or major improvement (e.g progressing from 8th last year to 4th this year) Participation medals, to encourage and recognise student participation
Aspirational	 Liked events where an elite sports person was present at an event Enjoyed being in a facility that elite sports people use 	 Have elite players of a sport interact with students at events, including providing opportunity to take photos and get signatures Consider guest speakers, to add to the appeal of the event



,	What is important to a positive school sport experience	Ideas to improve the school sport experience
	Secondary Sch	nool
Travel	 Travelling as a team to the event was a great opportunity to connect Get to travel without parents (inc. interstate) provides sense of independence 	Utilise opportunities to travel as a team (e.g school bus to an event) to build team morale
Team Training	 Getting to train together at a team first before the competition is important Get to meet team mates, know their strengths and develop team strategy for the competition Help to develop students' skills in the sport prior to the event/competition 	 Provide an option to train together at least four weeks out from the event Use past students or senior students, with experience in a sport, to mentor current teams of students
Quality/ Proferssional Facilities	 Important that courts, changerooms, grandstand are of a good standard Provides a feeling of playing in a venue that professional athletes play in 	 Ensure adequate spaces to practice/warm up Enable ability to watch other games on at the same venue (including where a school had two teams participating)
Well Organised Event	 Fixtures / grading of matches and teams made for a clear competition Equipment set up and ready to go Separate warm up areas designated at the venue Participant packs / team folder providing all key information Food available at the venue, including where food was provided free as part of the event! 	 Grade teams based on how many games they have won, with consideration of past performance of schools Provide different levels of competitions at event, such as: 'A' level competition for students who want to be competitive 'B' level focused on participation and less on competition Ability for students to assist in the set-up, planning and running of the event, particularly events where set up is time consuming Facilities to provide equipment to reduce the cost to schools Each school to provide equipment for their students to warm up with Provide a staggered timetable for schools to warm-up in facilities with limited space Provide half-courts / warm-ups for teams Provide students with information on fixtures and times/schedule for the day, not just the teachers Participant packs / team information to include a designated warm-up timetable, event run-sheet, fixtures and times/schedule, information on whether parents can attend or not, equipment list for schools and information on what students are to bring for the event



What is important to a positive school sport experience		Ideas to improve the school sport experience
Competition Options	 Playing different sports at the one venue Having both competitive and participation streams at the same event, to include more students to participate Mixed teams to provide social interaction with others Teams based on skill level, to provide good competition with those of a similar level. Less focus on win/loss results, and a focus on team improvement (to take the pressure off winning 	 Use facilities at sister/brother schools Provide a school weekly rewards system and acknowledgement for student participation in school sport Consider rules around mixed teams to encourage participation, e.g girls score double points, only two boys on court at once. Team competitions based on skill level, to provide good competition with those of a similar level
Supportive Envrionment	 Get to hang out with other students Where students are respectful of each other Coaches are well experienced and encouraging Umpires helping to explain rules of the sport and being polite (particularly for students playing a sport for the first time) 	Information provided for coaches and umpires to include that some students may not be experienced in playing the sport and provide an encouraging and supportive environment
Recognition	 Presenting of awards on stage to highlight achievements Being named in an all-star team, providing recognition amongst peers 	Include recognition for improving scores/results in games rather than at team's win/loss rati





Informing providing a positive school sport experience through School Sport Victoria

The insights from students will inform the planning and delivery of future interschool sport events and competitions, including local, Region and State Championship events.

THEME 4 Knocking Down Barriers



This theme had a focus on understanding barriers that prevent students from participating in school sport. A focus within School Sport Victoria's <u>Strategic Directions 2020 to 2030</u>, is to reduce barriers to participation for schools and students.

In considering barriers to school sport participation, a particular focus was on exploring barriers for **students with a disability, girls and those in regional and rural areas**. Students put themselves in the shoes of another student and considered the barriers faced from that student's point of view.

Students then considered ideas, for girls, students with a disability and regional and rural students, that might help overcome the barriers to that group participating in school sport.

Girls	
What barriers do girl's experience that would prevent them from participating in school sport?	Ideas to address these barriers
 Fear of judgement from others Sports are gender stereotyped (i.e. girl's and boy's sports), which leads to: The belief that girls fear getting hurt through playing certain sports, in particular contact sports Limited number of students participating to create an entire 'girls team', resulting in mixed teams, which:	 Non-competitive sports days that provide a safe space for girls to participate Introductory or learn how to play sessions that offer a range of sports Have more girls' teams in sports that are considered boys' sports Provide mixed sport and team competitions, including older age groups Celebrate achievements of women's sports teams and athletes to inspire student participation Have women sportspeople present to students to inspire participation Sports uniforms that provide a variety of options for girls to choose what they are more comfortable to participate in



THEME 4 Knocking Down Barriers



Disability				
What barriers do students with disability experience that would prevent them from participating in school sport?	Ideas to address these barriers			
 Feelings of judgement, including being afraid to try new skills in front of their peers Lack of engagement and encouragement to participate, from both fellow students and the school 	 Provide competition opportunities for students that consider a range of disabilities Modify sports or equipment to support 			
 Limitations of: Opportunities to play sports due to limited number of students participating Specialised events for students with disability 	 accessible participation Provide education on approaches to providing inclusive participation opportunities for students of all abilities 			
 Awareness and knowledge from staff, coaches and students around inclusive language to be used and approaches to adapt sports 	 Provide more sports and activities for students with disability to participate in Engage students in a range of roles in 			
 Venue accessibility A winning mentality in competitive school sports which sees the most 'able' of students being selected to play Feeling overwhelmed by the sporting environment 	school sport, such as scorekeeper and umpire.			

Fear of injury		
Rural and Regional		
What barriers do students from rural and regional areas experience that would prevent them from participating in school sport?	Ideas to address these barriers	
 Travel and distance to get to and from venues, including consideration of time and fuel costs Smaller population which leads to a lack of participants for sport teams Limitations of: Resources, including sporting equipment, facilities and coaches Organised sport competitions available and lack of competitors Range of school sports provided Time, due to students' commitment to land or farm work Funds, due to limitations on employment in rural towns Parents and family support, including: Unable to travel long distances due to work commitments Students feeling guilty about the time commitments for school sport Promotion and exposure of opportunities available to students to increase awareness and encourage participation 	 Hold interschool competitions in locations that are in between competing schools, so that travel commitments are shared Provide a range of transport options to support students/school teams travel to competitions Hold team training at the school or close to the school to minimise the need for transport Provide funding to schools to purchase quality equipment for use in school sport events Provide funding/scholarships to support travel to school sport competitions for regional schools and students Have athletes visit schools in rural and regional areas to inspire and encourage participation in sports that are available locally 	

Informing an understanding of barriers that prevent students from participating in school sport

As part of its <u>Strategic Directions 2020 to 2030</u>, School Sport Victoria is seeking to develop innovative solutions to reduce barriers to participation by schools and students, continue to grow multi-class opportunities to engage students of all abilities and ensure an inclusive environment to engage girls to play sport.

The insights into the barriers experienced by students and ideas presented to address these will be considered further by School Sport Victoria in its future design and delivery of school sport programs.



What Students Learnt from the Student Leaders Program in 2022



Being part of the SSV Student Leaders Group aimed to provide students with an opportunity to develop a range of skills, including:

- 1. Leadership skills, through student led conversations and collaboration with a wide range of personalities.
- 2. Communication skills, through presentation and discussion in a group setting and listening to and interpreting the needs of a group.
- 3. Research skills, through gathering insights from a peer group and critical thinking and analysis based on feedback.

Here's what students indicated were their key learnings and feedback from being part of the Student Leaders Program in 2022:

- The majority of students reported developing leadership, communication and research skills through participating in the program.
- The four topics explored throughout the program were a good fit for student engagement and provided the opportunity to express students' opinions.
- The majority of students reported that the length of session and frequency of sessions throughout the year were the right amount.
- Homework allocated between sessions and communication provided from School Sport Victoria was the right amount and guidance provided to students was clear.
- The facilitation of the sessions was good and students were provided with an opportunity to speak and provide input.
- Students sought more feedback on how their ideas were being applied in the work of School Sport Victoria.
- And importantly, students would recommend the program to other students.









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