

Media Release

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Students get their say on school success

Australia's first national study of how young people view success at school was officially launched on Tuesday 2 February, following the launch of the Federal Government's My School website last week. A national online survey, called *Tell Us: Are you more than your marks?*, invites all Australian secondary students to tell Government what success in school means to them.

Tell Us aims to add thousands of student voices to the debate on success in school. The survey findings will be released publicly and presented to Government in an upcoming conference. At www.tellus.org.au, students across Australia have the opportunity to complete a short survey, win prizes and speak up creatively using video, text and photography.

Adam Smith, CEO at FYA, says, "The Prime Minister says he wants to expand the information available on the My School website and we commend the Government's commitment to providing a more holistic view of a school's overall culture. What is still missing from this picture is the voice of students themselves – and this is why the *Tell Us* survey is so important."

"Success in school should mean more than simplistic test scores on numeracy or literacy. It should mean creativity, confidence, community involvement, caring for others, and developing a love of learning," he says. "We think that by amplifying the voice of young people, *Tell Us* can broaden perceptions about the meaning of school success."

Seventeen year-old Alexandra Adornetto, published author, *Tell Us* supporter and recent Year 12 graduate, thinks expanding the definition of success in schools is long overdue.

"Exam results shouldn't be the be-all and end-all of our time at school. We are so much more than our marks. Our interpersonal skills, the ability to entertain and help others, our creativity and teamwork should all be a part of what student achievement means."

The project is an initiative of The Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) in partnership with the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD).

Victorian Education Minister Hon. Bronwyn Pike says, "Success at school is not just about getting top marks. Young people often juggle academic studies with sport, casual work and family commitments with great success. This project is about listening to how young people define success to ensure their voice is heard."

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