

## MEDIA RELEASE

**FREE BUS FOR South Gippsland STUDENTS TO “GET ONBOARD” FOR MORE TRAINING OPTIONS**

Students from South Gippsland Secondary Schools will have more opportunities to participate in vocational training in 2019 after the State Government approved funding for a FREE bus service for students to attend training as part of their VCE or VCAL in Leongatha and Korumburra.

The bus will run, at no cost to students, two days per week leaving Cowes in the morning and travelling via Wonthaggi and Inverloch to training programs in Leongatha and Korumburra. The bus will pick up at 12 locations in total and will undertake the return journey in the afternoon.

Wonthaggi Secondary College Principal, Darren Parker said: *“We are always looking to provide a diverse range of quality programs to our students and this new service really opens up some options in vocational training that are not currently available to our students.”*

Students and parents from South Gippsland Secondary Colleges can now consider the range of programs on offer at AGA Apprenticeships Plus in Korumburra, Community College Gippsland and Federation Training in Leongatha. Building trades such as carpentry, electrical and plumbing are available in Korumburra. A diverse range of programs such as automotive, engineering, allied health, robotics, 3D printing, hairdressing, hospitality and early childhood will be running at Leongatha. Check out the SG TSA website ([www.sgtsa.com.au](http://www.sgtsa.com.au)) for more information and a full list of programs or contact Wonthaggi Secondary College.

Apprenticeship Field Officer from AGA – Apprenticeships Plus, Michael Dixon said: *“Building trades are booming at the moment in Bass Coast and South Gippsland and doing a VET program is excellent way to get a taste for the industry. It gives students a chance to experience what the industry is like and if they are suited. We recruit most of our apprentices from students that have completed one of these programs and we anticipate a large number of new apprenticeships to commence in the coming years.”*

Students can start a vocational program in Year 10 and be completed a nationally recognized qualification doing one day per week over 2 years. Students can then return to a regular year 12 program or continue with their vocational training. The available programs give credit in a VCAL (Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning) or VCE (Victorian Certificate of Education) program.

Wendy Major, Executive Officer at the South Gippsland Bass Coast Local Learning and Employment Network (SGBCLLEN) said: *“Given that 60% of South Gippsland and Bass Coast students choose not go on to University these programs provide a real alternative. These programs are directly linked to the workplace and offer a “hands on” learning environment that engages students and provides direct pathways to employment.”*

The successful funding submission to the State Government’s “Flexible Local Transport Solutions Program” was prepared by representatives of local training organisations, Wonthaggi Secondary College, local councils, the South Gippsland Trade Skills Alliance and the SGBCLLEN.

SG TSA Project Co-ordinator, John Cargill said: *“We have some of the best training facilities in regional Victoria and this is a fantastic initiative to make them more available to students from South Gippsland.”*

*For further information contact:*

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