

Changing the Tide - July issue

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Transformational Technology, Casino Stronger Smarter Leadership Program, Loganlea State High School NAIDOC Day

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Transformational Technology

The use of technology in our education space is an area that is so exciting, so unpredictable, and in every way limited only by our imagination.

I've recently joined the many other people challenging the status quo and started using an iPad with my work.

Here at the Institute we have been fortunate enough to work closely with the Apple team and we have all been blown away in our efforts to discover the functionality and possibilities of iPads and their potential to truly transform education and how we work with students in Australia and throughout the world.

It also led me to reflect on my days as Principal at Cherbourg and how the school transformed to integrate technology into the students' learning experience.



Dr Chris Sarra, Executive Director, Stronger Smarter Institute

As I said to students when I was at Cherbourg all those years ago, "The use of computers and information and communication technologies is like the new literacy. We got left behind in the old literacy, and there is NO way we are getting left behind with this one."

As a result I insisted that we throw whatever new technologies we could afford and get our hands on, and let the kids loose on it. It was so exciting to watch them engage such tools, often displaying a complete lack of fear that was usually evident within some of us as teachers.

Having spent some hours with the Apple team I feel that same sense of apprehension about how exciting, yet how daunting such pursuits can be. In many ways though I think it offers a challenge to us as educators and how we have done things in past decades. Many of us have been accustomed to being the keepers of knowledge, and handing it out to all hungry minds that will listen. The next few decades I'm sure will tip all of that approach on its head, and require us to be just as excited and just as inquisitive as our students, and be prepared to acknowledge that we may not be the great keepers of all knowledge anymore.

As I have come to know from just the few hours with the Apple team, knowledge is everywhere now, and we have to be ready to go with our children wherever they want to go to acquire it in a virtual sense. Our own sense of fear will make us blockers and stifle learning. Our sense of excitement, enthusiasm for learning, and our own inquisitiveness will make us facilitators of unbounded potential for learning.

How exciting is that?

Chris Sarra
Executive Director

How is technology transforming your classroom?
Share your stories by leaving a comment on [Chris Sarra's blog](#).

Casino NSW Stronger Smarter Leadership Program



Hayley, Casino Stronger Smarter Leadership Program participant

Casino High School, Casino Public School, Casino West Public School and Cabbage Tree Island Public School have joined the Stronger Smarter journey in the regional township of Casino on the Far North Coast of NSW. The participants included teachers, Aboriginal Education Consultative Group members, Aboriginal Education Officers, executive staff, Aboriginal community Liaison Officers and preschool staff.

What is extremely interesting about this cohort of participants is that they are a growing number of Stronger Smarter trained and influential members of a small regional town working towards changing how the school and community are embracing the Stronger Smarter philosophy. There is a vision for Casino to develop into a whole of community Stronger Smarter hub linked across sectors from preschools to university. It is an exciting time for Casino and its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as the tide of underachievement is challenged and high expectations

and student success is the norm.

The recent follow-up with these schools was truly inspirational with personal stories reflecting the significant shifts in people's thinking and doing. The 'workplace challenges' undertaken by the participants highlighted the complexities of schools but promoted the possibilities of success. The future direction for these school communities is exciting and another Casino regional program is planned for next year.

Hayley, one of the Casino participants commented on the [Stronger Smarter Facebook page](#):

"Tomorrow is my last day of my stronger smarter journey, it has been the best experience and journey I've embarked on. So sad its coming to an end, have learnt so much about myself on a personal level as well as professionally.

Whoever gets the chance to do it, grab it with both hands and make the most of it !!! Thank you to everyone at the Stronger Smarter Institute who has helped me with my confidence and courage, you know who you are!! ? xxx"

Sharon Grose
Programs Manager

Loganlea State High School NAIDOC Day

On 15 July Stronger Smarter staff attended the Loganlea State High School NAIDOC day.



Listen to audio interviews about NAIDOC Day and Loganlea's Stronger Smarter journey.

Under the leadership of Stronger Smarter Leadership Program alumnus and Loganlea State High School teacher Robin Gooley, the school put together a celebration that fairly buzzed with excitement and positivity.

Students, staff, and community were invited to an assembly, which included an address by Indigenous painter Peter Mulcahy, a musical performance by didgeridoo player John Briggs, and traditional dances by both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance troupes. Students were then invited to rotate through four workshops, each addressing a different aspect of Indigenous culture.

"It is just great to see the kids out there engaging with Indigenous culture ? not just our Murri kids, but all of our students," said Amy Laban, classroom teacher.

"I think the boomerang throwing has been the most popular workshop so far, but our group hasn't been to the ?Indigenous rap? workshop yet."

At lunch the students took on several members of the Gold Coast Titans emerging talent squad, and regular first-grader Esi Tonga, in a touch football match.

Special thanks must go to the Institute's Community Relations Officer - Communications (and resident rap artist) Gabriel Willie, who ran the wildly popular Indigenous Hip-Hop workshop.

Over all, the day was an unprecedented success. Thank you to the many staff members at Loganlea State High School who work tirelessly to ensure that this Stronger Smarter School delivers only the very best for their students.

Ben Wilson
Loganlea State High School Teacher and Stronger Smarter Teacher-in-Residence

Loganlea State High School NAIDOC Day



Left: Indigenous House Leaders Hayden and James with Conservation students Trevor, Thomas and Sam at the entrance to the Community Yarning Circle which was opened as part of the NAIDOC Day celebrations. Right: Gabriel Willie with students at the Indigenous Hip-Hop workshop. Ben Wilson rapping with students. Stronger Smarter's Principal Network Co-ordinator Iqbal Singh and Loganlea State High School Principal, Belinda Leavers, at the Yarning Circle ceremony.

Hub Schools Applications now open: Stronger Smarter Learning Communities project

Applications for the 2012 intake of Stronger Smarter Learning Community Hub Schools are now open.

The Learning Communities project aims to build a critical mass of Stronger Smarter schools and communities by supporting and developing these hub schools to support, develop and challenge others.

The Stronger Smarter Learning Communities project provides you with the opportunity to make a historic contribution to transformational change at a national level to improve outcomes for Australia's Indigenous peoples. Schools interested in being involved should download an application form from the Stronger Smarter website at <http://www.strongersmarter.qut.edu.au/sslc/applications.jsp>

Stronger Smarter Learning Communities Research

The Stronger Smarter Learning Communities? project commissioned a series of Regional Partner Research Teams to produce case studies of hub school journeys to improve outcomes for Indigenous students. These research teams are at the stage of submitting their case studies for review by the Indigenous Education Reference Group. The finalised case studies will then be published to assist other schools to develop and implement successful programs in their school communities.



*The Hunter Central Coast
Research Team (University of
Newcastle)*

Recognising and celebrating the successes of teachers, non-teaching staff and community people working in our hub and affiliate schools is an important component of our work. Every term schools forward to us the names of people that are doing some fantastic work in their schools and communities. These people are recognised through the Stronger Smarter Learning Communities? Recognition system. These examples of successful practice will be published at the end of the year. We are looking forward to celebrating these successes and publicly acknowledging the contributions being made from a diverse range of people across Australia.

Iqbal Singh

Principal Network Co-ordinator

Stronger Smarter NAIDOC creative! Competition Winners

This year the Stronger Smarter Institute ran the NAIDOC creative! Competition for schools right across the country. Primary and High school students had the opportunity to showcase their talents in the categories of Songs/Poems & Photography, with some great prizes available for the winners. Entries needed to reflect the 2011 NAIDOC theme ? Change; the next step is ours.

A big thank to you to all of the students who sent in their entries, the quality was very high and made the judges job of selecting winners very tough!

The winners are:

Songs/Poems:

- Primary School ? Tasia Kyle, Jarell Copley, Zoe Blackburn & Reggie Little; Bohlevale State School
- High School ? Inverell High School

Photography:

- Primary School ? Rebekah Ritchie & Eliza Owens; Orange Public School
- High School ? William Russell; Great Lakes College ? Forster Campus

Congratulations to the winning entries, we promise to keep making the Stronger Smarter NAIDOC Competition bigger and better in future years. We are always keen to read Stronger Smarter stories from school students right across the country, so keep sending your stories in! You can email your stories to ssi_enquiries@qut.edu.au

Toby Adams

Executive Coordinator

In the News

- NAIDOC celebrations continue ? www.titans.com.au, 27 July 2011 The Jetstar Gold Coast Titans continued their phenomenal efforts in the local community last week by taking part in Loganlea State High School's NAIDOC celebrations.... [read more](#)
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