

Changing the Tide - August

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Welcome from Paul Bridge, Gowrie Boys reach for teh Summit, Indigenous Student Ambassador Network

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Welcome from Paul Bridge

Hi Everyone

I am certainly settling into the role of Acting Director of the Stronger Smarter Institute while Chris takes some well earned leave. For the Institute, it is business as usual.

In my first few weeks at the Institute I have really appreciated the opportunity to be involved in some of the Leadership Programs in Victoria and Queensland.

It has been amazing to meet with some inspirational Aboriginal educators, teachers, school leaders and community members who are committed to making the



Paul Bridge, Acting Director Stronger Smarter Institute. with Toby Adams. Click to view a short interview [opens in your web browser]

change, in terms of high expectations relationships, to provide our children the best possible education they deserve.

The opportunity to engage in conversations with principals, teachers and community is an invaluable opportunity for me to provide feedback as well as acquire knowledge to support me as a school leader when I return to my school in Derby.

The [Stronger Smarter Summit](#) is approaching on the 8th-10th October. I would strongly encourage anyone who can make it, to come along and be reinvigorated - or as I say, have a recharge - to support you on your Stronger Smarter journey. The [Summit program](#) will highlight some of the outstanding teaching and learning and whole school programs taking place in schools around the country.

We still have spots available for interested participants to attend the Summit. I look forward to seeing everyone there.

Thank you

Paul

The Gowrie Boys reach for the Summit

Renowned hip-hop group, The Gowrie Boys, are packing their bags and heading south for the big city to perform at next month's [Stronger Smarter Summit](#) in Brisbane.

The multi-award winning Gowrie Boys, a group of inspirational year 11 and 12 students from [St Teresa's College, Abergowrie](#) in North Queensland, have attracted a strong following on mainstream and social media.

The Boys' success is just one example of many initiatives run by staff and community at St Teresa's College, Abergowrie, designed to foster a positive sense of Indigenous identity at their school.

The Boys will be a hard act to follow but Principal Bill Ahern, Indigenous Programs Manager Pelly Morganson and Head of Boarding Christian Gordon will also take to the stage to share their learnings with Summit delegates in an interactive workshop. Christian Gordon explains.

"All our boys are Indigenous. The boys come from over 40 different communities ranging from all throughout the Torres Strait, Cape York, the northern Peninsula area, right out to Palm Island and as far south as Brisbane.

"?trying to engage all our parents and our families is a big challenge and something that we are constantly working at."



One successful initiative specifically designed to address this challenge, the Community Consultation Committee, will feature in the workshop.

"The Committee is bringing all these people together from all these different communities to discuss the College and how it operates," explained Christian.

Despite the unique context of the school, Christian believes many of the learnings will be transferable to other contexts ? in particular strategies for embracing both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures effectively in schools.

"I think some schools are good at incorporating the Aboriginal cultures but they may sometimes forget to incorporate the Torres Strait culture as well," said Christian.

While Christian is keen to share his school's insights with the Stronger Smarter community, he is equally keen to embrace the learnings of others and the opportunity to network with school and community leaders succeeding in Indigenous education.

"I'm looking forward to sharing stories with other schools to see what they are doing, and learning ways we could fine tune what we are doing even further," said Christian.

St Teresa's College, Abergowrie will present on Day 1 (Monday 8 October) 11:00 am to 12:30 pm under the theme 'Embracing Positive Identity'. [View](#) the draft program.

The Gowrie Boys will perform at the [Summit Dinner](#) on Tuesday 9th October in Le Grand Ballroom at Sofitel Brisbane. The performance will feature their Vibe Alive winning entry as well as traditional Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal dance.

Tailored Professional Learning Package: Koorie Education Workforce

Great things have been happening across Victoria with the Koorie Education Workforce.

In particular our recent successes have been;

- Providing over 12 days training in the areas of - Presentation Skills, Professional Writing and Data Analysis
- Currently we have 42 members of the Koorie education workforce engaged in Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for Certificate IV in Education Support. And at the moment, 26 of these Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) have successfully completed all requirements for this process
- Regional Advisory Groups with representation for local communities, regional management and the workforce have been established and had a first meeting in 4 regions and plans are underway for setting up these groups in all other regions
- An audit of professional learning needs has been undertaken. Our initial results show the main areas for training and professional development are Communication, Written Communication, Data Analysis and Relationship Building

We are currently sourcing brokerage of training in these areas.

The partnerships formed as part of this project between the Stronger Smarter Institute, the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), Swinburne University and the Victorian Aboriginal Education Associated Incorporated (VAEAI) have been crucial to the collaborative work and successes of this project.

Learn more about the [project](#).

Indigenous Student Ambassador Network

This year, the Indigenous Schooling Support Unit ? Central Southern Queensland and the Stronger Smarter Institute established Queensland's first ever Indigenous Student Ambassador Network (ISAN) ? a network that supports Indigenous students to develop as culturally centred leaders. It enables the students to network with students from across Queensland and provides opportunities to discuss issues and share ideas about what is important to them.

The Indigenous Student Ambassador Network is made up of 22 secondary school students with one male and one female representative from each Learning Community hub school. These students have been nominated by teaching staff along with members of the local Indigenous community including Elders and Indigenous Workers.

As a support network, ISAN aims to connect students on a regular basis by encouraging students to share stories through the use of iPads and other learning activities. The network prompts students to identify social action projects in their school and local community, which in turn promote community engagement. Students are also reinforced with a positive sense of culture and identity that leads to high expectations.

The hope is that students will eventually be given the chance to influence government on future initiatives in improving outcomes for Indigenous students. It gives students the opportunity to be seen as positive role models within their school and local community and if anyone is going to influence the future of Indigenous education, it's this generation.



*Loganlea State High School
Ambassadors*

Learning Communities Podcast

The August edition of our Learning Communities Podcast series is now available on our [website](#) and [iTunes](#). Episodes include:

Ken Swan: Neuroscience and education

Ken Swan, former Principal and publisher of Student Leaders International, discusses Neuroscience and its implications for teaching and learning, and how it might benefit Stronger Smarter Learning

Communities.

Paul Bridge: Sustainable Learning Communities

Paul Bridge, Acting Executive Director of the Stronger Smarter Institute and leader of the Kimberley Learning Community Hub, provides insight into establishing a sustainable Learning Community.

The Podcast series supports the Learning Communities monthly teleconference meetings.

Learn more about [Learning Communities](#).



Learning Communities Podcasts are available via iTunes, RSS and Playlist.



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