



**strongersmarter**

**AITSL Pilot Project**

**Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
Parents and**

**Communities in Education**

**Stronger Smarter Institute,  
Queensland University of Technology**

**Final Report**

**The National Research Centre of Science,  
ICT, and Mathematics Education for  
Rural and Regional Australia**

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**Thanks to the team it is a combined effort**

## Glossary

**Deadly** – an Aboriginal English word for impressive. Throughout this report *deadly* is used to mean, a valued, effective and impressive teacher

**Skudda** – a Kimberley Kriol word for impressive/deadly

**Growing up** – is an Aboriginal English phrase term for raising children.

**community** refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have a direct relationship with the schools and form part of the school community, in addition to being Community members

**Community** refers to the Aboriginal Communities that the schools operate within. This definition includes the Traditional Owners of the area, several language groups and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the region. This definition is broader than those community members directly engaging with the school at anyone time.



## 2 Executive Summary

The Stronger Smarter Institute (SSI) conducted workshops in diverse schools around the country to capture the unique voice and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and community members. These workshops also provided the opportunity to work with teachers and school personnel to investigate what makes a *deadly* teacher and to identify how these teachers effectively engage with community.

Targeted schools from metropolitan, provincial and very remote communities participated in a range of workshops and rich data was collected representing diverse perspectives. Processes designed to stimulate debate, reveal assumptions and explore a range of perspectives and beliefs provide us with unique insights into the experiences and understandings of students, teachers and community members living and working in vastly different contexts.

The information collected is contained in the Appendices to this report and provides a rare opportunity to listen to and take account of student and community voice. The rich data enables teachers to reflect on their own beliefs and deepen understanding of the significant impact of the teacher-student and teacher-community relationships. The insights shared indicate that it is not a list of tasks we tick off, but how we interact with students and community that is seen as important. The existence of a respectful relationship is essential ensuring a sense of connectedness with the school and the school's willingness to work with community rather than imposing what the school or teachers think is required. These workshops were often the beginning of a new way of engaging with community, and the conversations that arose indicated that there is not always a clear understanding of what community engagement is, whose responsibility it is to engage and what are the most effective ways to go about building these genuine relationships based on respect. The information gained for this pilot has significance for the individual schools involved as well as having wider implications for schools and communities working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and Communities from very different demographics. Whether working with a school and Community with one or two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students or a school community with 100 % Aboriginal students, the message is the same: build positive strong relationships and ensure clear understandings form the basis of plans that are inclusive of the Community not imposed on Community.

The processes facilitated rigorous debate and the insights that can be gleaned from individuals' responses provide valuable information from which schools can build upon with a view to enhancing community engagement in their specific school and Community context. In addition teachers can understand from community and student perspectives what they can do to build effective relationships with their students and Communities.

The research questions focussed on describing the attributes of an effective teacher and how they facilitate and support community engagement from community, student and school perspectives. This recognises the symbiotic relationships established by effective teachers with key community members, to build a school environment that fosters genuine community engagement. Strategies used in different contexts were also explored as examples of promising practises.



Workshops conducted were responsive to the needs and requirements of the participating schools and uniquely structured to accommodate the individual sites in the available time. Consistent processes and similar statements were used throughout to enable comparison across sites and to build a clear picture by capturing key messages. Interestingly, regardless of the demographic or context of the schools, the community, students and teachers recognised the importance of building strong relationships with students and Communities. The schools involved could build on the conversations that have been started and use the information to explore some key concepts of what community engagement means to different stakeholders, and ensure shared understandings and visions form the basis from which to develop plans: listening to community and students and building new ideas together is a means of ensuring school efforts to engage with Community are fully understood and supported by all. The vibrant conversations that were facilitated by these workshops are evidence of the potential benefits.

It is important to note that terms such as **engagement** and **community** are commonly used in education discourse by schools and policy makers and often assumed to have a singular meaning understood by all. However when explored we found that *community* may mean parents and carers to school personnel but may have a completely different broader meaning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community members. Establishing shared definitions that are clearly articulated and understood by Community, students and school personnel are essential to achieving genuine engagement occurs.



## 3 Introduction

### 3.1 Setting the Scene

The Stronger Smarter Institute (SSI) works with a number of school and community leaders across the country to improve the educational outcomes and wellbeing of Indigenous students.

<http://www.strongersmarter.qut.edu.au/>

The Stronger Smarter Leadership Program (SSLP) equips school and community leaders with the belief and capacity to play a part in transforming their own schools and communities. Intensive residential programs are run throughout the year providing a dynamic learning experience and an opportunity for participants to reflect on their own values, beliefs and practices, and to work with the Stronger Smarter team and colleagues to make a difference in Indigenous education.

<http://www.strongersmarter.qut.edu.au/leadership/program.jsp>

This AITSL pilot project provided a unique opportunity for targeted school leaders to work with the SSI across a range of contexts:

- Metropolitan Queensland primary and secondary schools with a minority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- Provincial primary and secondary schools on the North Coast of New South Wales, with significant numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- Very remote Kimberley schools catering to a population with a majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders students, families and community members.

Key school and community leaders from each of the schools we worked with on this AITSL pilot project have completed the SSLP and continued their engagement with the SSI through the Stronger Smarter Learning Communities (SSLC) project <http://www.strongersmarter.qut.edu.au/sslc/>

All participating schools are part of the hub and affiliate network that forms the Stronger Smarter Learning Communities. The schools comprised:

1. A State and Senior High school in Queensland – both hub schools
2. Two district High Schools in Western Australia – a hub and an affiliate school
3. Two Public Schools and a High School in Northern New South Wales – one hub and two affiliate schools





**Figure 1 Sites of Participating Schools**

SSLP and SSLC develop the capacity of hub school leaders to support, develop and challenge schools within their learning communities and across the national network. Involvement in this AITSL pilot project was embraced by the principals and seen as a means of working with the Stronger Smarter team, to use Stronger Smarter processes and personnel to work with students, teachers and Communities to:

- add value to existing school activities
- facilitate constructive conversations around the *National Professional Standards for Teachers*
- provide students, teachers and community with a significant professional learning experience (stronger smarter)
- capture unique perspectives and voices from community members, students and teachers
- seek individual and collective input
- enhance understandings of community engagement,
- identify attributes effective *deadly* teachers
- Identify improved ways of working together that can be incorporated into the schools professional practice

The information collated from each of the workshops had a dual purpose. One was to inform the schools and provide valuable community perspectives, including those of parents/carers, teachers and students, to stimulate constructive dialogue. The second was to provide insights that can be drawn upon to inform AITSL and the profession about the attributes of effective teachers working in a range of contexts. It was considered important to describe these attributes and to identify elements considered essential, to enable genuine community engagement within diverse school communities.

It is important to note here that SSI was conscious to ensure that the information was given back to the schools in ways that might assist them to build on the relationships and communications that were cultivated in the workshops.



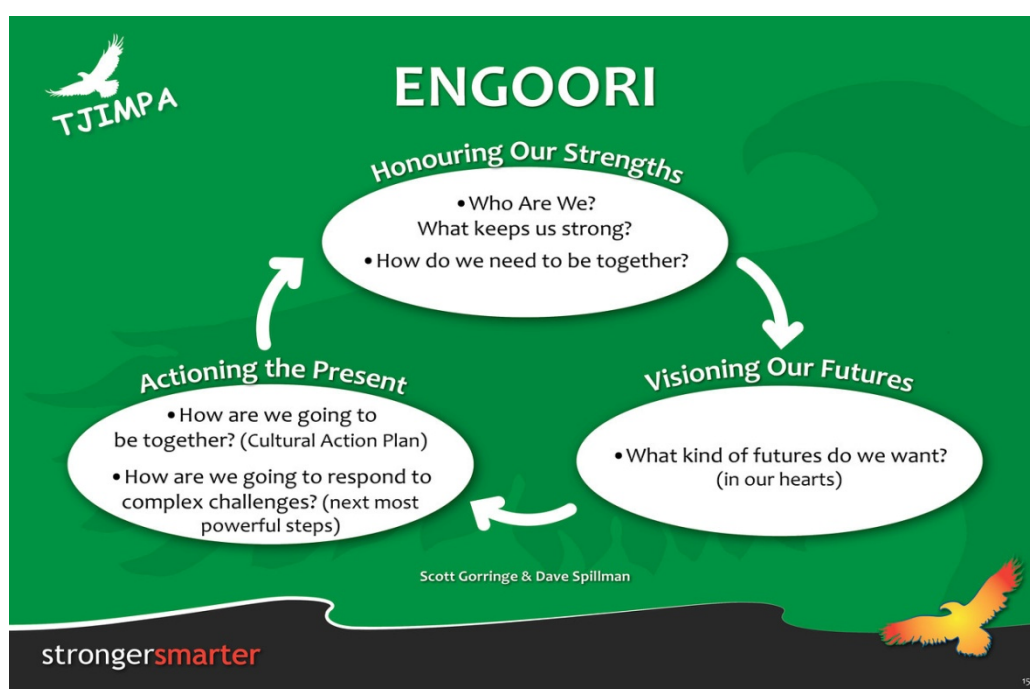


In addition to the workshops, SSI capitalized on scheduled activities and accessed:

- teachers and community leaders at a regional SSLP program in the Kimberley to provide definitions of what community engagement means to them, and
- a group of undergraduate education students from Queensland University of Technology (QUT) to provide their definitions of community engagement.

A team of SSI staff trialled and implemented a number of strategies at the Northern NSW site and documented the community engagement that occurred during this process. The DVD produced in this context will provide a resource from which the school can build upon by documenting what came out of the workshops. Often an outside agency comes into schools and communities, seeks information and then leaves. We were conscious to ensure that while we would facilitate processes to stimulate the dialogue, informing our understandings, we also gave back to the schools useful information which they could utilize to improve community engagement in their contexts and communities.

The workshops were designed around *Engoori* which is an Aboriginal framework introduced to the Stronger Smarter Institute by Scott Gorringer, a Mithaka man, who has developed the framework by drawing upon his years of experience as a leadership consultant combined with the wisdom and teaching of his old people. The framework is based on honouring strengths, visioning the future and actioning the present. The framework has been further refined overtime by Scott Gorringer and David Spillman (Gorringer & Spillman, 2008).



**Figure 2 An Overview of the *Engoori* Framework**

*Engoori* has been described as an “Aboriginal framework that focuses on reconnecting people and reigniting authentic dynamic conversations of strength to create strong foundations from which to build positive school cultures” (Gorringer & Spillman, 2008).

So, in the spirit of building dynamic conversations and focussing on the first two phases of the framework, the structure and processes of the workshops were designed to inform the AITSL pilot



project by incorporating processes used and refined at the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program that honour strengths and vision the future.

These workshops intended to facilitate dialogue that explored beliefs and assumptions and to reveal individual and group perspectives from community, students and school personnel. The focus was on community engagement and identifying the attributes of effective teachers drawn from diverse school and community contexts.

It was considered important to encapsulate attributes of effective teachers when considering community engagement to recognise the notion that professional practice and professional engagement as detailed in the Standards do not occur in isolation. It is not possible to have one without the other. In fact, community engagement does not exist when genuine relationships within the schools and Communities are not established. Relationships are the foundation of creating environments where sustained engagement becomes part of the ongoing school culture and practices.

### 3.2 Contextual Issues

Diversity was a consideration in the selection of communities to participate in the pilot project. This consideration was a deliberate effort to ensure that any broad generalisations were not attributed to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities and students, and to avoid the notion that there is only one experience or perspective representative of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the country.

Workshops conducted were responsive to the needs and requirements of the participating schools and uniquely structured to accommodate the individual sites in the time available. Consistent processes and similar statements were used throughout to enable comparison across sites and to build a clear picture by capturing key messages.

The Stronger Smarter Institute team facilitated a number of workshops to draw on community, student and teacher voice and perspectives. These workshops explored participants' beliefs, experiences and assumptions around attributes of an effective *dearly* teacher. Building on the positive narratives explorations of what constitutes community engagement, including a range of processes and strategies that need to be demonstrated, in order to establish and sustain genuine engagement of the school and community were identified.

Within the tight timeframe of the pilot project, and with such an ambitious scope, the findings need to be considered as preliminary. An important outcome has been the capturing of views and perspectives from a wide range of people with differing experiences. These perspectives highlight areas that can inform practice and be further investigated over a longer period of time.

The conversations that occurred during the workshops highlighted that some basic information often assumed by teachers educational institutions can lead to mixed messages between school personnel and Community. In some instances there are not shared understandings as to the purpose, benefits and definition of what community engagement actually is. The activities undertaken during this pilot to clarify the understandings of community and community engagement highlighted that while schools have planned activities designed to promote community engagement, the purposes are not always explicit or clearly articulated.



It is interesting to note that the principal in one of the schools was surprised at some of the conversations that arose from the stimulus processes. He later reflected that when they last had a whole staff focus on Indigenous students and connecting with parents, the composition of the staff was vastly different, indicating that strategies related to community engagement are not something that are ticked off at some stage and not revisited again for some time. Rather, they are part of an ongoing process requiring continual development and refinement.

The Appendices to this report contain documents that capture the voices and perspectives of participants across the different sites. They have been grouped in schools to identify the several perspectives conveyed through each of the processes. We have endeavoured to keep the integrity of the contributions by presenting the community perspectives as a collection of responses from each of the school communities. In this way the information can be used to inform practice in each of the sites while providing us with key messages consistent across all schools and communities.

The conversations that were facilitated at workshops raised issues and provided stimulus for rigorous debate. These points, listed below, are worth noting and provide a basis for further investigation.

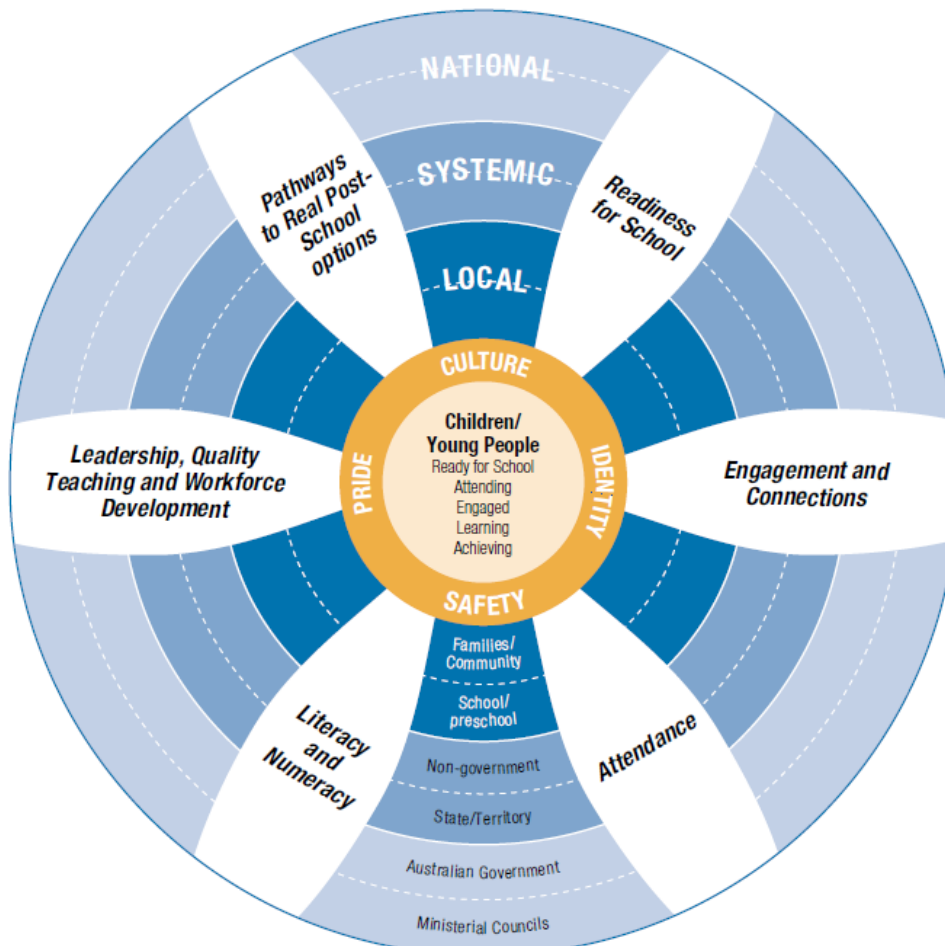
- What constitutes 'community' and is it the same for everyone?
- Are there shared understandings of what community engagement looks like?
- Why is community engagement important?
- Whose engagement is required and for what purpose?
- How does community engagement contribute to improved outcomes? There is a need to articulate this clearly to all parties, and to establish shared understandings and goals which will provide motivation and purpose, conducive to engagement
- Is community engagement defined by how many times parents come to the school and perform tasks required of them by the schools, or is it about a shared partnership between schools and communities, which looks different in different contexts and changes within a school community overtime?
- Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have had very different experiences of schools than children experience today. Many have also had negative experiences of interacting with school personnel and this has impacted on the interactions they have today. The need for strong respectful relationships is highlighted throughout. The video prepared from the workshops conducted in Northern NSW, and which will form part of the presentation to AITSL in February captures the concerns some Aboriginal parents and family members face when entering a schoolyard, as a result of their own previous experiences and histories. Such experiences and the impact on individuals' confidence and capacity to engage with schools call for understanding and support.



## 4 Research Questions

### 4.1 Rationale

The MCEECDYA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010 – 2014 refers to engagement and connection at the national, systemic and local levels, as integral elements to the plan.



**Figure 3 MCEECDYA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Plan 2010 - 2014, Conceptual Design (p5).**

State and Territory Smarter Schools National Partnership agreements and most school plans incorporate a focus on engaging communities. Yet the conversations at the local level could be enhanced by developing shared understandings of the nature of community and engagement, and then clearly articulating how genuine engagement contributes to improved outcomes for students. These basic understandings are often assumed knowledge. This is particularly important when it is considered that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents come from language and cultural backgrounds very different from those of the teachers. The continuum activity utilized in the workshops (detailed on page 21 of this report) and the processes designed to obtain definitions of community engagement, stimulated rigorous debate and highlighted the need for community



engagement to be understood and clearly articulated, so that it looks the same for all stakeholders in the school community. Do teachers and community have similar perspectives of community engagement and have the purpose, roles and responsibilities been clearly articulated and understood?

The research questions focussed on describing the attributes of an effective *deadly* teacher and how they facilitate and support community engagement from community, student and school perspectives. This recognises the symbiotic relationships established by effective teachers with key Community personnel and also highlights the strategies they put in place for building a school environment conducive to an ongoing process of genuine community engagement.

The workshop processes required teachers, students and community members to reflect on their own experiences, beliefs and assumptions and hear other peoples' perspectives. Each school's data set is provided in the Appendices of this report and they reveal insights that provide guidelines for schools that can be built on to enhance community engagement, and inform teachers of the valued attributes they demonstrate that clearly impact dramatically on students.

**Research Question 1:** What are the attributes of teachers and school leaders who effectively facilitate and support engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and Communities in education?

An article titled *Building an Emotional Bank Account with Students*, (Sarra, 2011) provides an appropriate backdrop for the responses we had from community members and students recalling their experiences of a *deadly* teacher. In a workshop visualisation activity, these responses overwhelmingly demonstrated the importance of the relationships teachers build with their students. See student and community responses in Appendix D.2.3. Figure 4 is an illustration provided by a secondary student from Northern NSW who described the teacher supporting her as represented by the seat and the flowers represented her growing from the teacher's support, fed by that fact the teacher believes in her.



**Figure 4 Student visualisation of positive qualities of teachers**







**Figure 5 Wordle from primary students describing attributes of a *deadly* teacher**

Figure 5 represents a Wordle from an activity undertaken by year 4, 5 and 6 students describing how a *deadly* teacher made them feel. Their descriptions convey the positives and the impact teachers have had on them, using words such as *Skudda* to mean really good, or impressive, and happy, calm and relaxed to describe their influence. They also referred to ways teachers made them feel and identified as a positive that they were learning more everyday; one child said he feels 'brainy and cool'. It is interesting that while many references were made about being made to feel good, there were also several descriptions that fit with a high-expectations learning environment. This message was consistent across sites with a Northern NSW student summing up her experience of a teacher making her feel like she was 'on top of the world' and 'teaching (her) so she can go anywhere, even to the city and graduate' (Figure 6).



**Figure 6 View of the impact of a positive teacher by a Northern NSW Student**



Another student's account of a *deadly* teacher raised the issue of respect, which became a consistent theme and seemed to be a big factor in how students and community felt they were treated by the teachers and the school. When there are respectful relationships positive narratives described effective student engagement: "A *deadly* teacher makes me feel happy bubbly and fun. When it is fun we wanted to do more so we could have fun and learn. Everyone respects you more. If they are nice to us then you get more work done" (Secondary student, Qld). Figure 7 illustrates a student's feeling of strength and importance when treated with respect.



"My *deadly* teacher made me feel welcomed, she made me feel stronger and didn't make me feel bad ... she noticed me" (Secondary Student, Qld.)

**Figure 7 Student representation of how a *deadly* teacher made him feel**

The sad clarifying comment here that 'she noticed me' highlights the little things teachers do such as greet students in a welcoming way which make a difference. Another said "when you are welcomed there is a sense of belonging." The community group at the second Queensland school also talked about the welcoming atmosphere at the school that extended from the principal right across the school to staff and other students.

Bishop and Berryman (2006) in their book *Culture Speaks - cultural relationships & classroom learning* includes interviews with Maori students in New Zealand who describe the impact resulting from teachers showing an interest in their cultural heritage or making an effort to pronounce their names properly. The same could be said about the responses we received across all sites in this project. These are instances of actions that cannot be listed within a set of strategies because they are more than tasks; they are about authentic interactions and respectful dealings with students and Community.

**Research Question 2:** What strategies and processes are required for successful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and Communities?

There was quite a lot of discussion across various sites about the schools and teachers getting out of the school environment to meet parents and carers in the community in settings, such as, at church, sporting events or the supermarket. It was noted that some schools have planned strategies, such as,



home visits with Aboriginal support staff to introduce teachers to the community, whilst other schools leave it entirely up to the teachers to develop their own connections. Some teachers in their survey responses described varying degrees of confidence and commitment to connecting with parents and carers. Others successfully develop sensitive respectful relationships and some require additional support and impetus to do so.

National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week activities were raised across several sites and the community groups made the point that these activities should be more ongoing throughout the year and not just a special event. A parent had a strong message about “more learning about culture in the curriculum, more dance and chances for kids to feel proud and to share their knowledge”. Her definition of community engagement was about community playing an integral role in embedding Indigenous perspectives across the curriculum and ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were delivering that aspect of the teaching and learning program. This is consistent with the Stronger Smarter meta-strategy to acknowledge and embrace a positive sense of Indigenous identity.

The majority of descriptions recounting how schools engaged community described special events rather than a formalised part of the teaching and learning program. Conversations were often centred on what support looks like, taking into consideration that parents may not feel they need to come up to the school to support their kids, due to a range of other commitments, and that they trusted the school to teach their children. Support for these parents may be ensuring that kids get to school and helping them with homework. Teachers on the other hand often interpreted that as not being interested in their child’s education. Such commentary raised the question of whether or not the responsibility to engage always rested with the families. Some responses conveyed a level of blame, ‘we have tried that and they didn’t turn up’ rather than exploring options for what could be done differently to build connectedness and to foster the idea that ‘we are all in this together.’

The text responses to the survey described what teachers do to engage with families. Some were dismissive and others described a lack of confidence or support. This was intriguing because it seemed to imply there is an option for teachers to opt out when it comes to engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents. Others described means of building relationships with families and community by going out into the community themselves. A teacher from Western Australia talked about how building relationships with the community increased his knowledge and improved his capacity to teach. This was in contrast to some of his colleagues and teachers in the Queensland schools who described the need for parents to come in and help them with school-based tasks in the classroom.

## 4.2 Focus

The investigation undertaken for this pilot study was based on a Strength-based approach in an effort to shift the conversation from the usual blame and disabling negative patterns. Instead, the focus was on positive narratives derived from responses that illustrated real life experiences of how schools have engaged community in the past. Elaborating on the personal narratives also contributed to enhanced understandings of the attributes of a *deadly* teacher.

During discussions with the regional program participants, an important question about identity was raised:

*“Who is community? Sometimes our students in the high school are in the parenting role. Maybe the school needs to consider the role of those students and informing them of arrangements or*





*seeking advice from them... more questions need to be asked to ensure the right people are advised and consulted.” (Teacher, WA, SSLP follow-up)*

The teacher raised here the first in a set of assumptions that schools need to consider by articulating a question about what constitutes community in this context? Is there an assumption that ‘parent’ or ‘carer’ are the same for all regardless of home circumstances, and do schools need to adjust who they perceive as a parent or carer, as a beginning point. A teacher at one of the Queensland schools mentioned that “some of our students don’t live with their parents.” This comment was based on an assumption that ‘parent’ and ‘carer’ relate to a concept of the nuclear family, which may not be the case for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Nor is it representative of many cultural groups or individuals living in Australia today, e.g., foster families, extended families or where older students may be playing a significant role in ‘growing up’ the child. Before developing programs designed to engage community there is a need to understand the unique role many play in ‘growing up’ a child and therefore to consider who needs to be engaged. Once assumptions about who to engage have been challenged and resolved, the appropriate people can be identified and worked with, to develop meaningful relationships from which to proceed.

### 4.3 Understanding Community Engagement

The teachers at one of the Queensland schools described community engagement as parents coming into the classroom to help them with reading and conventional school tasks. Other community and student groups described it as NAIDOC week activities or sporting events. Most of these activities involve parents coming into the school rather than the school going out to the community.

The undergraduate student definitions of community engagement (Appendix K.1.1) were interesting because they revealed quite different concepts of community engagement from school personnel. These students who are in the process of studying to become teachers have a working definition of community engagement that differs considerably from teacher definitions. It is understandable that the teachers’ conceptual understandings of community engagement are shaped by their school experiences but it also highlights that community and undergraduate teachers do not necessarily share the same understandings of the key elements of community engagement. These disparate understandings further emphasizes the need to start the conversation by defining community engagement to ensure a shared understanding is the foundation and then devise ways of connecting with and engaging with the community in the ongoing process from the planning to implementation phase.

### 4.4 Focus Area 3.7 Engage parents / carers in the educative process (Professional Practice Domain)

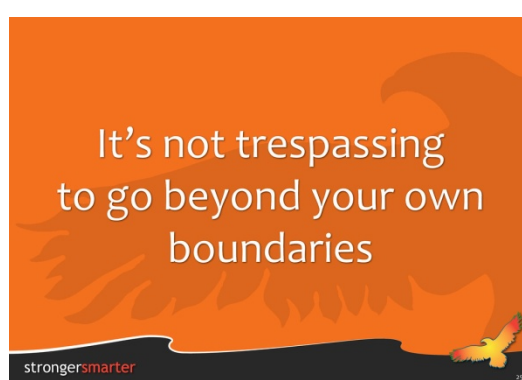
| Standard 3 – Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| Focus area  | Graduate  | Proficient  | Highly Accomplished  | Lead   |
| 3.7 Engage parents/ carers in the educative process                 | Describe a broad range of strategies for involving parents/carers in the educative process. | Plan for appropriate and contextually relevant opportunities for parents/ carers to be involved in their children’s learning. | Work with colleagues to provide appropriate and contextually relevant opportunities for parents/ carers to be involved in their children’s learning. | Initiate contextually relevant processes to establish programs that involve parents/ carers in the education of their children and broader school priorities and activities. |



### Figure 8 - National Professional Standards for Teachers - Focus Area 3.7

While most schools have established practices that are intended to engage community the emphasis is often on getting the community into the school as opposed to what teachers can do themselves to ensure genuine engagement becomes a reality.

Across the sites, community, teachers and students described the relationships that transformed engagement in schools, whether it was a significant teacher demonstrating they cared about individual students or those teachers who actively sought out opportunities to meet with parents outside the school environment. These activities formed the basis for establishing respectful relationships and provided opportunities to share information and positive stories of children's progress. These informal approaches were raised across sites as being something that teachers, can do beyond the school gate. A Queensland teacher said "the school fence is a boundary not barrier", a statement that echoes a core idea that is reflected in the work of the SSI.



**Figure 9 Stronger Smarter Institute Provocation Statement**

A community member from Northern NSW said "I haven't seen a good report for any Aboriginal student in my time". Such a comment is worth remembering in the context of parents who may appear reluctant to engage with the school. Some parents and community members may have constantly had negative experiences as a result of being approached only when issues or concerns are raised. All the more reason for positive relationships and friendly approaches to become an essential starting point.

School based community engagement initiatives described often referred to whole school approaches and did not clearly set out a role for all teachers. However the workshops particularly emphasized the important role individual teachers could make when building caring relationships with students and developing connections with carers. In some conversations and survey responses teachers highlighted concerns about going out into the community. It should be remembered the important role teachers make when building the relationships in the classrooms and this becomes an important starting point. However, schools have a responsibility to support teachers to build their capacity and confidence to engage with parents and carers. Strategies, such as, pairing new graduates with a community member often provides that mentoring support and can become the basis of developing nurturing relationships.

## 4.5 Focus Area 7.3 Engage with parents / carers (Professional Engagement Domain)



| Standard 7 – Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community |  |   |  |   |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Focus area   | Graduate   | Proficient  | Highly Accomplished  | Lead  |
| <b>7.3 Engage with the parents/carers</b>  | Understand strategies for working effectively, sensitively and confidentially with parents/carers. | Establish and maintain respectful collaborative relationships with parents/carers regarding their children's learning and well-being. | Demonstrate responsiveness in all communications with parents/carers about their children's learning and well-being. | Identify, initiate and build on opportunities that engage parents/carers in both the progress of their children's learning and in the educational priorities of the school. |

**Figure 10 National Professional Standards for Teachers – Focus Area 7.3**

Parents and community have often had very different experiences of the education process than schools provide today. It is therefore important that community, and students for that matter, have a strong sense of connectedness to the school, beyond the significant relationships individual teachers develop. Professional engagement needs to occur aligned to whole school strategic plans and initiatives that have involved community in developing and implementing the strategies.

The Stronger Smarter philosophy advocates high-expectations learning environments and the importance of embracing a positive sense of cultural identity for students and communities within schools. It is important to note the two metastrategies are complimentary, that you can have a high-expectations learning environment and embrace a positive sense of cultural identity. As teachers demonstrate professional capabilities across the four career stages, they do not lower expectations when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities and the imperative to build relationships will ensure the strategies used are informed by the community context and shaped by community input.



## 5 Methodological Considerations

The Stronger Smarter Institute invited schools from within our existing networks to participate in the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Pilot, to ensure we captured the experiences and views of participants working in vastly different environments by including teachers, students and community members from different demographics including metropolitan, provincial and very remote contexts.

A core premise that guided the selection of schools and the structure of the pilot study was that we respect and honour the diversity of views, experiences, histories and beliefs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Efforts were made to include schools and communities from the Torres Strait but it was not possible to conduct workshops within the tight timeframe. Some Torres Strait Islander students attend schools in which we conducted these workshops. Extensive efforts were made to ensure community, student and teacher voices were central to the report and each of the school data sets is provided in the Appendices.

Workshop processes used in the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program were adapted for this pilot project to promote sharing of ideas, views and beliefs in order to elicit key messages and insights from a wide range of people. The physical environment was arranged to ensure everyone could participate, positioned to be at the same level with all participants comfortable and able to contribute.

### Stronger Smarter Processes:

#### 1. Setting the circle

Honouring all contributions from community, students and school personnel and ensuring all contributions are regarded by all as being of equal importance and value.

#### 2. Check in and check out

At the beginning and end of each session working with teachers, parents or community a Stronger Smarter Institute ritual, known as *Checking in and Checking out*, is enacted to set the values for the processes and ensure everyone is aware their contributions are equally valued, honoured and accepted.

#### 3. Continuum

Specific statements are made and participants physically situate themselves along a continuum from Strongly agree to Strongly disagree. The conversations that occur around these statements indicate individual's beliefs and assumptions and facilitate rigorous debate. Participants are free to adjust their position in response to alternative views that may influence their thinking.

#### 4. Visualizing the attributes of effective teachers

Drawing on their own experiences participants represent what it felt like when they had a *deadly* teacher, recalling what it felt like, then describing how the teacher made them feel. Illuminating the attributes demonstrated by effective teachers when building these relationships.

#### 5. Never ending conversation (Northern NSW workshops only)



A conversation is started where each participant adds to the previous person's comment creating an ongoing dialogue around what is community engagement and why it is important. The process of the *Never Ending Conversation* was only used at the Northern NSW workshops as it was difficult to get people to engage and it was felt that the process required more time and practice before more constructive conversations occurred. However reviewing the student responses to the *Never Ending Conversation* provides some interesting comments.( Appendix E.4.2)

In two sites, surveys were given to teachers to complete. While these were small sample sizes they represented vastly different contexts. We were trying to gauge whether there were substantial differences in teachers' perceptions of what community engagement is in a school with a minority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students compared with a school where Aboriginal people made up the majority of the town's population. The free text responses (Appendix A.2.1 & Appendix B.2.1) gave us interesting insights into assumptions and beliefs and indicated how teachers see their roles and responsibilities related to engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities.

### **Overview of Schools:**

**Provincial Learning Community Schools, Northern New South Wales:** Two Public Schools and one High School, combined to engage in the workshop with participants representing community, students and teachers. Some of the community members were representing more than one school because they had experiences of and connections to primary and secondary schools in the area.

**Very Remote Western Australian Schools:** Workshops were conducted at two District High Schools. In addition to the workshops school and community leaders, from schools across the region attending a Stronger Smarter Leadership Program (SSLP) were asked to describe their understandings of community engagement. These workshops in the two District High Schools were facilitated by Dyonne Anderson, Stronger Smarter Institute, principal in residence, without the support of additional Stronger Smarter personnel owing to the remoteness, logistics and costs involved. Individual workshops were held in each site and adapted to suit the needs of the schools in the time available.

**Metropolitan Brisbane schools:** Workshops were conducted in a State High School and a State Primary School. At the State High School a workshop was conducted with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student leadership group, 3 Aboriginal school staff, a teacher, a Teachers Aide and school community liaison officer, as well as a community Elder. At the State Primary School the teacher workshop was conducted during an afterschool staff meeting and the surveys were administered at the end. Not all teachers completed the survey. The community and student workshop was conducted the following afternoon during school time.

In each site the workshops were tailored to the specific context. In the remote WA District High School for instance the principal was new to the school and the data collected provided a 'point in time' perspective on community engagement and a baseline on how the community and students felt the school was engaging with the community. Some sites had limited time and availability so processes were adapted to ensure the school's needs were met while we were stimulating dialogue that would inform our purposes.

The key messages were drawn from the responses of community, students and school personnel and documented in the Appendices to this report. The power of the narrative is captured in the school data sets.







## 6 Results from the Investigation

### 6.1 Data Collection and Management

Surveys were completed by staff at two schools in an attempt to gain a snapshot of their teaching experience, a baseline from which to gauge their self assessments and to ascertain whether there were marked differences in perspectives from such different contexts.

The survey analysis (Appendix G.1) is very limited and highlights the differences between the years of teaching experience with the very remote school having a large proportion of graduate staff, which is reflective of many remote and very remote schools across the country. It must be noted that the teachers across both sites had limited prior knowledge of the National Professional Standards for Teachers, so their self-assessments were not informed by a set criteria and may not align with years of experience or relate to demonstrated skills. There is a need in all sites to introduce the Standards and to engage teachers with the Standards. Some teachers showed genuine enthusiasm to learn more about them and were grateful of the opportunity to learn about the Standards. Copies of the Standards were distributed to interested parties.

The survey data was interrogated at a very basic level recognising that the teachers in both the Queensland and Western Australian samples had limited exposure to the National Professional Standards for Teachers, so their responses were fairly subjective and further descriptors or criteria need to inform their self-reflection or ratings, to ensure accuracy and to allow comparison. The text-based answers (Appendix A.2.1 & Appendix B.2.1) that are part of the school data sets reveal interesting perspectives.

### 6.2 Analysis of the Data

The voices of community, students and teachers were honoured, drawing on consistent themes and using quotes or information gleaned from the workshops to capture and represent the key messages. The data captured through the workshop processes including the conversations, the survey responses, and the artworks have been scrutinized to highlight the messages that were raised across the different sites.

#### 6.2.1 Analytical Procedures

By drawing out the themes this process becomes a mechanism for the narrative of many to inform the report while using specific people's responses to convey the messages. More responses can be found in video grabs, notes in the appendix and through viewing the video (to be shown as part of the presentation in February).

The investigators have experience working in similar contexts enabling the sharing of insights from an informed position. In addition, post-workshop debriefing sessions informed refinements and enabled issues to be deconstructed..



## 6.2.2 Results

### 6.2.2.1 **Research Question 1:** *What are the attributes of teachers and school leaders, who effectively facilitate and support engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities in education?*

While some people recounted the role the teacher played as a sports or dance teacher, their descriptions revealed that what makes a *deadly* teacher, is not about what is taught but is about the interactions with students, and the impact these have on how they are made to feel.

The processes were centred on a strength base, though at a High School the conversation with students covered negative experiences in schools prior to coming to the school. One secondary student described being ridiculed by her maths teacher and after being strong at maths previously, now takes no interest in maths and has dropped it as a senior subject. Her statement was that that teacher “made me feel like nothing” (Appendix D.2.3.). This is mentioned because the workshops were eliciting positive stories and the clear messages about positive influences of *deadly* teachers that can be taken from the comments. However, the opposite is also true and the dramatic impact of negative interactions having a lasting effect was also raised.

In the context of building an emotional bank account with students, Sarra (2011) states:

“This is why schools and teacher student relationships today and into the future must be resolutely positive. The learning environment and the teacher student relationship must be relentless around a message that says consistently to learners: ‘Hey, I believe in you!’”

This message came out strongly in the visualisation of a *deadly* teacher process, as well as from community discussions that emphasized the central importance of the student teacher relationships. Sarra (2011) highlights here the need to ensure the relationships are positive but some of the conversations during the workshops raised concerns and alluded to the impact on students when the relationships are not positive. Demonstrating the importance of getting the relationship right, with students in the first instance and then extending the focus on positive ways to engage with parents, carers and the wider Community.

### 6.2.2.2 **Research Question 2:** *What strategies and processes are required for successful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities*

The data collected does not reveal a set of skills or processes that can be ticked off or achieved but rather an ongoing process to be built upon. This process involves genuine relationships between, individual teachers and parents and carers, as well as whole school and community initiatives that are inclusive and which are developed from partnerships with community as significant contributors..

The visualisation activities explained the attributes of teachers seen to impact on students that result in quality relationships. These factors such as showing you care, respecting students, making them feel welcome and helping them to be the best they can be, can also be applied to effectively working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and carers.

## 6.3 Summary

Mackie (2011) refers to the importance of a caring adult and the responses we had from all stakeholders during the pilot project overwhelmingly demonstrated that the *deadly* teacher made it





clear to students that they cared. The feelings associated with these recollections were often very colourful and positive. Interestingly most students easily identified a teacher who has had or is currently having a significant impact on them.

Mackie refers to a connectedness paradigm and describes activities that many schools engage in, such as, extra curricular activities designed to promote a positive school culture. The schools we worked with could list initiatives within their schools as evidenced by the examples of community engagement offered by community, students and teachers from their own experiences. However Mackie also makes the *'important distinction that connectedness is child and community centred while fostering of a school spirit can be seen as school centred'* (Mackie, 2011, p 10).

Perhaps this is the most important factor that schools are often busy attempting to engage community to 'foster a school spirit' without fully capitalising on the connectedness and ensuring shared understandings have been co-created to leverage community ideas. Real engagement occurs when equal partners in a reciprocal relationship work together and all fully understand the purpose, processes and intended outcome. Often with the best intentions, schools implement programs that are important to schools without explaining the purpose or seeking advice from community in the first instance. Chris Sarra from the Stronger Smarter Institute talks about **working with** communities **not doing** things to community. This distinction could inform the ways schools do business.

Another rewarding aspect of the workshops resulted from the inclusion of students in the process. Not only did they contribute valuable information and ideas but they expressed such gratitude about being consulted and commented on being respected and valued.

Primary students at one of the Queensland Public Schools commented in their *Check Out* that they were proud to be part of this group (small group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students chosen to participate) and their involvement in the project may instigate an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their school to participate in a leadership group. A secondary student in Western Australia said in his *Check Out* "This is really worthwhile and I felt valued because it was the first time the school wanted to know what I thought". This powerful response impacted on adults in the room who started the conversation around 'where to from here' – how can we conduct these types of workshops in other remote schools and build on what was started in this school?

Community members at all sites were also appreciative of their involvement and valued an opportunity to contribute. Schools could build on this goodwill and use these processes as the foundation of building stronger partnerships.

The information collected from community, schools and students was rich and informative. While the data informs the schools and this report, the processes initiated in the workshops were positively received and have seeded new ideas.

The data collected represents diverse perspectives but often has a consistent message regardless of the contexts. It is clear that improved understandings and better communication will enhance community engagement. It is also clear that schools, communities and students have valuable contributions that can inform processes.



## 7 Resources

### 7.1 Resources Developed for the Pilot

Posters were developed from the visualisation activities and will be presented back to the schools to honour individual contributions that convey the key messages.

A video has been developed from the Northern NSW Learning Communities schools and will form part of the presentation to AITSL in February. The video is a means of documenting the processes and will become a record of the initial conversation that is seen as the beginning of a journey, to build authentic school and community relationships within this Learning Community.

The surveys (Appendix F) developed were seen as a means of capturing attitudes and beliefs from a range of teachers in an efficient manner and would guide further investigations.

### 7.2 Existing Resources Used in the Pilot

The schools were drawn from the wider Stronger Smarter networks and their engagement with this project was a result of existing relationships and a willingness to work with and capitalise on, involvement with the institute.

Intellectual property of *Engoori* remain with Scott Gorringer, David Spillman and the Stronger Smarter processes remain with Stronger Smarter Institute.

Indigenous knowledges that have contributed to ways of doing business with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have informed how we structured the workshops and the type of information sought.



## 8 Findings and Outcomes

### 8.1 Implications and Recommendations from the Pilot

Further work needs to occur to ensure all stakeholders have a shared understanding and are in a position to contribute ideas. Beliefs and assumptions need to be expressed around community engagement, its identity, its role, why it is important, and how to effectively build on school and teacher practice.

During one workshop a facilitator posed the question of whether community engagement is important at all. This outraged the participants who responded sharply without being aware that the statement was made to provoke a strong response. Statements like this and those used during the Continuum activity forced the participants to reflect on their beliefs and then to articulate their views. This type of response revealed assumptions and beliefs and allowed for interesting discussion. Staff, community and students were able to debate a range of topics revealing their understandings and beliefs and provide the basis from which to move forward. These processes were an effective means of facilitating debate, revealing misunderstandings or concerns and identify strengths. The positive responses received from all participants, but particularly community and students. This demonstrated that involving community and students in the conversation is of paramount importance. Involvement in this process was seen as the beginning of a journey.

#### 8.1.1 The Local Perspective

The individual schools involved in the workshops can use the data to inform future directions and the workshops can form the basis from which to build an invigorated relationship with key community members. Issues raised in the different context can be addressed using the student, community and teachers ideas. Once some of the assumptions have been challenged and clearer shared understandings are formed, the schools can be proactive in ensuring the contributions of all impact on the planning and implementation of programs across the whole school.

The schools can reflect on areas they can improve on, based on the conversations that took place at the workshops and which have been documented through the processes (Appendix, school data sets)

The data packages compiled for the AITSL pilot project consist of insightful contributions that need to be incorporated into planning so that involvement in this process adds value. The views and perspectives shared are honoured and enhance the operations of the school, particularly for teachers in their classrooms as they deal with parents, carers and school executive teams on a daily basis.

#### 8.1.2 The National Perspective

The information from the various contexts highlights the importance of drawing on the expertise and experiences within the school and community context. Involvement in these workshops and the rich contributions received demonstrate the value of involving community, students and parents.

There is no 'silver bullet' of a few tasks to tick off, but a commitment to an ongoing process that changes over time and constantly builds on genuinely respectful relationships.

The journey is predicated on building relationships, improving understandings and communication, and capitalising on the goodwill and commitment to improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres



Strait Islander students. These notions exist across sites, but sometimes need to be refocussed. Community, students and school personnel displayed a commitment to learn from each other and to work together to help schools be the best they can.

## 8.2 Planning for the Future

Each school that participated in workshops expressed gratitude and enthusiasm about their involvement. The intention is that information gained from the feedback from community, teachers and students will be used to inform planning for the future. In some of the sites bringing community and students in to seek their views was an initiative and will become part of the school's practice.

Possible enhancements could be:

- A small-scale research project which builds case studies of teachers working effectively with communities and explicitly showcases attributes and highlights strategies these teachers and schools use to engage with communities in a range of contexts. Building on the work of SSI and *What Works*.
- A professional learning module (PLM) designed for teachers at different career stages to develop personal and professional plans for individuals and whole schools plans, reflecting on current practice, setting goals. Building the capacity required to achieve the next career stage and enacting and reporting on strategies for improving parent and community engagement.
- Professional learning opportunities designed to work through with community, mapping processes, building on community school partnerships and ensuring the conversations and relationships are continually growing. This process in itself can enhance community engagement.
- Localised activities that ensure teachers across a range of diverse contexts, including remote and very remote communities, have access to learning opportunities that introduce them to the National Professional Standards for Teachers and enable them to understand and use them regardless of their career stage or demographic.



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### For further information

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What Works have developed *the school and community working together* series June 2009

[www.whatworks.edu.au](http://www.whatworks.edu.au)

<http://www.whatworks.edu.au/dbAction.do?cmd=displaySitePage1&subcmd=select&id=398>



## 10 Appendices



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## A. Wavell Heights State School, Wavell Heights, QLD

### A.1. School Overview

At Wavell Heights State School we place an emphasis on high expectations. We provide a well balanced curriculum that maintains a strong focus on Literacy and Numeracy. We work hard to meet the needs of our students within a context of significant cultural and linguistic diversity. At present 25% of current enrolments have an ESL background and upwards of 35 cultural groups are represented. A positive climate exists at the school and collaborative planning is a distinctive feature of the school. The school offers a supportive environment that caters for the needs of the individual student. Wavell welcomes the support of parents and caregivers as well as the wider community.

#### A.1.1 School facts 2010

|                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| School sector    | Government   |
| School type      | Primary      |
| Year range       | P - 7        |
| Total enrolments | 390          |
| Location         | Metropolitan |

#### A.1.2 Students 2010

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Total enrolments                       | 390   |
| Girls                                  | 192   |
| Boys                                   | 198   |
| Full-time equivalent enrolments        | 389.8 |
| Indigenous students                    | 8%    |
| Language background other than English | 23%   |
| Student attendance rate                | 94%   |

#### A.1.3 Student Background 2010

| Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) |                |                 |                    |     |
|--|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----|
| School ICSEA value                                     |                |                 | 1019               |     |
| Average ICSEA value                                    |                |                 | 1000               |     |
| Data source  |                |                 | Parent information |     |
| Distribution of students                               | Bottom quarter | Middle quarters | Top quarter        |     |
| School distribution                                    | 25%            | 15%             | 28%                | 32% |
| Australian distribution                                | 25%            | 25%             | 25%                | 25% |
| Percentages are rounded and may not add up to 100      |                |                 |                    |     |

#### A.1.4 Links

My School Data:

<http://www.myschool.edu.au/MainPages/SchoolProfileRep.aspx?SDRSchoolId=310000001149&DEEWRId=11138&CalendarYear=2010&RefId=XY5R%2f9yofZsnHaL4sN2LRzQoHGU6dw10>

School Website:

<http://waveheigss.eq.edu.au/wcms/>

## A.2 Workshop Data

### A.2.1 Survey Responses from Teachers

| How can the Teacher Standards assist your role in working with Indigenous students and parents?           | How do you engage with your Indigenous parents and community members?  | What does engagement with Indigenous parents and community mean to you as a classroom teacher and how important is it?   | Are you confident to engage with Indigenous parents/carers and community? Why or why not?   | What are the attributes of a quality teacher working successfully with Indigenous students?  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| hopefully positively  | invitation in the class room - to share stories, traditions, etc; regular after school conversations/feedback; open door policy  | This year it has been important for a particular Indigenous student in my class. His aunty, the admin team and I are all working together to set behaviour standards for this particular child. he has responded well to this knowing there is a consistent approach and that we are all on the same page and working together | yes, have a great deal of respect and interest in Indigenous culture etc  | consistent and high expectations, understanding acceptance and respect, compassion towards all students and their circumstances  |
| not sure  | the same as all parents - with consideration, understanding and respect  | very important - historically, culturally, socially; our Indigenous people are important to Australia and therefore everything we do and discuss should have their perspective   | yes, because it is important to engage with everyone from every background  | respect, care, concern, expect and set high standards, value   |
|   | ring, write, email and talk to parents   | parents being involved with their children   | Would like to do more. not huge experience  | enthusiasm, effort   |
| this will assist me to understand the Indigenous community to build positive and productive relationships | NAIDOC week's celebrations provide our community with a week of activities e.g. Aboriginal dance, boomerang throwing games. We also have a whole school NAIDOC parade  | The students in my class are all valued no matter what their background is. Engagement with my parent ensures positive outcomes for my students  | I would like to engage more with the Indigenous community. I would like to have them in my classroom for SOSE lessons but have not had success in finding community members who are able to do this | patience, being caring, understanding, using encouragement to achieve success, being fair, being a good communicator   |
| strategies, communications  | meeting, seek their help, respect them and show that respect, mentoring students, T/aide work  | Highly important, as with all parents and community members. I have lived in an Indigenous community and have firsthand experience which has helped me along my journey as an educator   | Yes. I respect them. I have earned their respect.   | high expectations, consistency, respect, engage/involve their family/community members   |
|   | In past school related as I do any other parent. targeting individual child's needs.   | varies depending on school and need  | in present and recent situations, yes.  | sensitivity, energy, communication, willingness to learn, optimism in regard to ability of all children  |
| help me understand what is expected when working with Indigenous students and parents                     | We celebrate NAIDOC week and invite elders in to do art, boomerang throwing, fire lighting etc. we do a unit on bush medicine and Indigenous culture/history. Have an open door policy to all cultures. Indigenous staff to assist students, and invite community members in to talk | I personally learn a lot about the Indigenous culture, home life and what they feel about learning and education   | yes, I have taught several students in the past and have enjoyed a rewarding and open relationship with them.   | showing respect, appreciating differences in learning styles, valuing cultural differences and backgrounds, learning more about Indigenous culture, history, supporting them, caring for them, upholding their special contribution to history, art, science, bush craft |

| How can the Teacher Standards assist your role in working with Indigenous students and parents?   | How do you engage with your Indigenous parents and community members?  | What does engagement with Indigenous parents and community mean to you as a classroom teacher and how important is it? | Are you confident to engage with Indigenous parents/carers and community? Why or why not? | What are the attributes of a quality teacher working successfully with Indigenous students?   |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| give suggestions on how to involve parents  | Participate in school board activities e.g. NAIDOC week. extra support for Indigenous students   | very important as some Indigenous students need 'good' role models   |   | All children given equal opportunities in class. high expectations for all students   |
| guide/reminder when planning/communicating  | Exactly how I engage/involve all parents. welcoming, positive, understanding   | We are a team parent/child/teacher. we need to be to move forward.   | yes, vast experience.   | flexible, communicative, non-confrontational  |
|   | No current parents. I still talk with all Indigenous/community members from past classes and schools   | There is respect for the school. Attendance at school events. mutual respect.  | Yes! Lots of experience. I have never felt any different                                  | open-minded, respectful, a genuine interest in each student   |
| learning more about culture, traditions and beliefs (I am a new/beginning teacher)                | the same as any other parent in my class   | it is very important - engagement brings positivity  | yes, as much as I am confident to speak with any parent in my class                       | very similar to a quality teacher for any student - caring, enthusiastic, hard working, listens, know the child and their life, interests etc |
| can communicate the standards to the parents as parents and students know what the standards are. | communicate with them as school events and invite them to participate in or contribute to the events, either by being involved physically or emotionally | it means that non-Indigenous students get to learn about the culture of Indigenous people                              | Yes. I have many Indigenous friends who have been a great help to me and the community.   | understanding the importance of what culture means to the Indigenous students and that education is important on all levels                   |

## A.2.2 What is Community Engagement

| Teachers' Group – Responses  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Individual 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community with others outside school environment</li> <li>• Encouraging help/support with school activities (classroom/whole school)</li> <li>• Invite to important events as guests</li> <li>• Invite to share experience</li> <li>• Promote local businesses</li> <li>• Involvement in direction of school</li> </ul> <p><b>Individual 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community feel like they are part of the school and what happens within the school</li> <li>• They are involved in decisions that the school make especially if they will affect the community</li> </ul> <p><b>Individual 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community impact into purpose</li> <li>• Community assist in/direct purpose</li> <li>• Sharing of running</li> <li>• Awareness of differenced in requirements of members</li> </ul> <p><b>Group</b><br/> <i>Community Engagement is best achieved when the community feel like they are part of the school and what happens within the school by taking ownership and being consulted on decisions that will affect the community.</i></p>   |  |
| <p><b>Individual 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class/School/Wider Community being involved in decision making and implementation in order to influence the teaching/learning content and environment.</li> <li>• All members of this community accepting responsibility for its effectiveness</li> </ul> <p><b>Individual 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having people in the area actively involved and interested in the school and its children</li> <li>• Community members who act as positive role models for the children</li> <li>• Working to improve</li> <li>• Working together</li> </ul> <p><b>Individual 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilizing all abilities and life experiences</li> <li>• Allowing members to understand the greater issues of the community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Individual 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents and the broader community members forming partnerships working with the school or becoming involved in school activities</li> <li>• Active involvement</li> <li>• Supporting teachers in classrooms</li> <li>• Supporting school activities/musicals by attendance</li> <li>• Excursions</li> <li>• Running workshops etc</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> <li>• Partnerships relationship building</li> <li>• Involvement from everyone</li> <li>• Interest</li> <li>• Community engagement involves building partnerships and positive relationships within a community that has an interest and shared responsibility for achieving positive outcomes for the entire community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Group</b><br/> <i>Community engagement involves building partnerships and positive relationships within a community that has an interest and shared responsibility for achieving positive outcomes for the entire community.</i></p> |  |
| <p><b>Individual 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having community involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parent night</li> <li>- Parents on parade</li> <li>- Activities around school e.g. fetes, Christmas cards, swim and disco nights</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |  |

**Individual 2**

- Parent helpers in the room
  - Parent input into school – Projects and Calendar of events
- Community events become school events
- Teaching and learning from community/ people from outside school teaching students

**Individual 3**

- Community valuing teachers, school admin systems
- Support via communities – coming to school events, report cards

**Group**

- *Parents input into calendar events*
- *Parents supporting school events*
- *Community teaching their knowledge and using their skills in school*
- *Community and admin need a mutual respect.*

**Individual 1**

- Open door communication
- Valuing everyone's difference
- Respecting everyone's opinion
- It takes a village to raise a child
- Taking responsibility
- Wanting to change

**Individual 2**

- Parental involvement help within class program and routines
- Good rapport with/between students/parents/community members
- Regular feedback and conversations
- Informed
- Safe
- Respecting/valuing opinions
- Open door policy

**Individual 3**

- Community members supporting classroom ideas
- Helping in room
- Helping children at home with homework etc
- Parents and friends attending classroom school functions

**Group**

- *Parent involvement in children's education (aware of what is going on)*
- *Feel safe to come to the school to speak about children*
- *Feel able to ask for help*
- *Participate in significant days*
- *Understand expectations of school and upholding those expectations*
- *Recognition and respecting differences – so feel valued*

**Individual 1**

- Open door policy and invitation to the community to have access to school facilities
- Invite the community to offer expertise to the school in areas such as sport, maths reading to students, specific talents and training to offer kids from the wider community
- A lot of resources in the community are not utilised in schools
  - People (cultural)
  - Facilities
  - Environmental options
  - Art
  - Academic
  - SOSE
  - Science
- People should feel part of the school in the wider community – parents, retirees, cultural

**Individual 2**

- Parent respecting education
- Children wanting support
- Teachers giving respect and support

- Everyone smiling

#### **Individual 3**

- Positive involvement by all/some groups from local area e.g.
  - Parents/colleagues
  - Local business
  - Elders
  - 3 levels of government
  - Churches
  - Grandparents and other relatives
  - Local city years
  - Community groups – CWA, Rotary, Lions

#### **Individual 4**

- Community key stakeholder in school process
- Essential in school moving forward
- Open door policy to a point where community members use their skills/support to reinforce the value of school/education

#### **Group**

- *Positive involvement*
- *Open door policy*
- *Value and use experience*
- *Sharing*
- *inspiring*



## Parent and Community Group – Responses

What does Community Engagement look like?

- Supporting kids
- Discussions around home and even if they don't come into the school it doesn't mean they don't care
- Knowing what goes on at home
- Parents may be happy and not need to come to the school
- You know when they are not happy!! Not just engagement within school teachers need to get out to see what makes people different as well as (understand) the similarities
- Pretty good here
- "best start into education"
- Feel welcomed from teachers, kids they say hello to me and the baby.
- my grandson loves coming to school hurrying me up in the morning and when we go home can't get him out of here
- High expectations very high expectations of behavior and academic results
- Principal welcomed us when we came back , smiles kids and principal we felt really welcomed

What else could the school do to improve on Community Engagement?

- Being a part of what others do - their lives
- Morning teas with Murri parents so we can all get to know each other – sometimes it is assumed that we all know each other
- Athletics carnival
- Need to look outside morning teas. Parents may think what will I get roped in to do... no other agenda
- One parent had a strong message about more learning about culture in the curriculum, more dance and chances for kids to feel proud, get parents to share their knowledge.

### A.2.3 Continuum Process

#### Parent and Community Group (Note: 1 parent of a Non-Indigenous)

**1. Statement: I feel welcome in my school**

- All in agree
  - Parents and community all agreed they felt very welcomed and they thought it was because the parents are quite close as a group and they feel they can talk to the teachers.
  - The school culture is good
  - A very good school
  - Parent's kids and teachers are all very welcoming the whole school makes you feel welcome.

**2. Statement: The leadership in my school is actively engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents, carers and community**

- Most people from middle up to agree, not strongly agree but agreed
  - the leadership is trying to engage but obviously not reaching everyone (teacher comment)
  - If there were more cultural activities that were ongoing not just one offs (for NAIDOC week etc) parents may want to be involved.
  - Curriculum needed to be more relevant and that Indigenous perspectives should be embedded in the classrooms.
  - Parents need to participate also as it is a two way street. Same parents who are always involved.

**3. Statement: My child's school works to promote a positive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity**

- a couple of parents agreed a couple sat on the fence
  - it should happen more
  - NAIDOC is done well though there needs to be more throughout the year
  - Raelene said she was non committal because she has just come back to the school
  - They liked how the whole school is involved in cultural activities, Indigenous and non Indigenous but it is good to build on that

**4. Statement: Stronger is more important than Smarter**

There was a bit of movement with this one

- V strongly agree
  - if you don't feel strong and proud inside, you won't achieve anything
- 1 sitting on the fence as
  - They believe both are as important as each other and you couldn't have one without the other
- A couple disagreed that they go hand in hand

**5. Statement: Parents and Community members want to be involved in their children's education**

- Everyone agreed they want to be involved in their children's education
  - It is more than just being up here at the school. (Reading notes, knowing what's going on in the school, paying for excursions, helping with homework)
  - It shouldn't be an imposition for the parents .... Parents lack confidence and don't think they are worthy of taking on roles and responsibility schools request or expect of them, and not sure if they can do what the school wants them to do.
  - Suggestions how do we get other parents to come in, looking at having more morning teas to help one another as parents.
  - Schools can be open to be inviting parents but often for a different purpose, agenda

**1. Statement: I feel I belong in my family**

- Everyone did have a strong sense of belonging in their family and they clearly understood the concept of belong

**2. Statement: I feel I belong in my school**

- Majority Agreed (to strongly agree)
  - they did feel like they belonged in their school with a
- few students who were in the middle (undecided either way)
  - there are ups and down
  - sometimes you do things they don't want to
  - sometimes you haven't learnt something and you have to answer and you don't know the answer
  - sometimes you get put down by the other kids, and other kids pick on you because there is some work you don't know and you haven't learnt it
- Few strongly agreed
  - my relatives and friends go here
  - I like it here
  - you get a good education
  - the teachers help you and are supportive

**3. Statement: I feel valued in my school**

Students spread out along the continuum, diverse range of where people were situated.

- a lot of kids in top half of agree
- one child on the fence
  - they do help me but I don't feel as valued as I could be
- one child towards disagree
  - Sometimes they get left out of games
  - Some of the students aren't very nice and we don't feel very valued.
- Strongly agreed
  - help me to succeed

**4. Statement: My school makes me feel proud to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander?**

- Majority strongly agree
  - no one puts me down
  - they make me feel welcomed
  - the school celebrates NAIDOC and boomerang throwing
  - There are lots of other cultures in the school and they don't expect you to change who you are
  - Everyone participates in celebrations.
- 2 in the middle
  - didn't feel strongly about feeling made to be proud

## Teachers

### 1. Statement: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children can learn as well as other students

- The majority strongly agreed
  - Indigenous kids are like every other kids
  - Every child is an individual
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait islanders shouldn't be a stigma
  - They can learn All children need different relevant content
- 3 in the middle
  - They have more health problems, low SES, demographic I don't strongly agree depending on their home life Indigenous versus non Indigenous no difference.
  - We still need to put more there, it is not a level playing field considering they are playing the same field I don't strongly agree
  - 2 half way towards Strongly Disagree
  - can learn depending on school content environmental conditions, positive or negative depending on what is valued and who is teaching

### 2. Statement: This is reflected in our school data

- No movement, not a significant shift.
  - Our Indigenous kids go ok
  - Teachers hadn't analyzed any data on Indigenous students the principal and deputy were aware of the data but not the teaching staff

### 3. Statement: It is essential to engage Indigenous parents

- Majority Strongly agree but
- 3 backed off from strongly agreed.
  - Treat those parents like anyone else
  - What is the need?
  - Parents and school on same page
  - Not straight forward
  - Minority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
  - Kids do great anyway
  - Those that moved do we have parents willing to come?
  - Parents might be working
- 4 Towards disagree
  - not turned up to interviews but felt kids were succeeding
  - parents obviously value school but engagement maybe at home - not a school level but a homework level
- 1 chose to disagree you can't always engage
  - Children still succeed school environment is nurturing some kids don't even live with their parents.

## B. Derby District High School, Derby, WA

### B.1 School Overview

Derby has a population of 4500 people; the township is situated in the Kimberley region of WA. Derby DHS is located in attractive and well maintained grounds. With an enrolment of over 500 students it provides an education program for students from K-12. Students in Years 10-12 have access to a range of senior school courses and training pathways leading to Yr 12 Graduation. The school works in partnership with the local TAFE campus. School facilities include air-conditioned classrooms and purpose built secondary, specialist and primary learning areas. With the school motto and shared values 'Diligence, Courage and Strength' and the 'Stronger Smarter philosophy', students work towards high standards of academic and social achievement through engagement in the school's inclusive, safe and stimulating learning environments. The mix of very experienced and inexperienced staff, creates a dynamic innovative teaching team environment. The school is working in conjunction with the various communities to build on the strong working relationship that exists through a formalised school community partnership. Both the P&C and the School Council play an important and active role in the school.

#### B.1.1 School facts 2010

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| School sector    | Government  |
| School type      | Combined    |
| Year range       | K - 12      |
| Total enrolments | 578         |
| Location         | Very Remote |

#### B.1.2 Students 2010

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Total enrolments                       | 578   |
| Girls                                  | 287   |
| Boys                                   | 291   |
| Full-time equivalent enrolments        | 556.5 |
| Indigenous students                    | 79%   |
| Language background other than English | 4%    |
| Student attendance rate                | 70%   |

#### B.1.3 Student Background 2010

| Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) |                |                 |                    |     |
|--|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----|
| School ICSEA value                                     |                |                 | 708                |     |
| Average ICSEA value                                    |                |                 | 1000               |     |
| Data source  |                |                 | Parent information |     |
| Distribution of students                               | Bottom quarter | Middle quarters | Top quarter        |     |
| School distribution                                    | 31%            | 40%             | 28%                | 0%  |
| Australian distribution                                | 25%            | 25%             | 25%                | 25% |

*Percentages are rounded and may not add up to 100*

#### B.1.4 Links

My School Data:

<http://www.myschool.edu.au/MainPages/SchoolProfileRep.aspx?SDRSchoolId=410000004073&DEEWRIId=6679&CalendarYear=2010&RefId=FLdqKCbcABPT0wdpQ6AbIf8udNmASALg>

School Website:

[http://www.det.wa.edu.au/schoolsonline/main\\_page.do?displayURL=overview.do&schoolID=4073](http://www.det.wa.edu.au/schoolsonline/main_page.do?displayURL=overview.do&schoolID=4073)

## B.2 Workshop Data

### B.2.1 Teacher Survey Responses

| How can the Teacher Standards assist your role in working with Indigenous students and parents?  | How do you engage with your Indigenous parents and community members?   | What does engagement with Indigenous parents and community mean to you as a classroom teacher and how important is it?   | Are you confident to engage with Indigenous parents/carers and community? Why or why not?  | What are the attributes of a quality teacher working successfully with Indigenous students?   |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| provides guidelines as to how to work with Indigenous students and parents   | home visits, face to face calls, phone calls, communication books   | Very important; engagement means open and regular communication with parents and community. Providing an open door policy where they can enter the class and feel comfortable. It means involving and encouraging them to be a part of their child's schooling | yes, had experience with it  | care, understanding, patience, high expectations, respect, adapting work to suit all students, providing time to connect with community, interested in their lives  |
| give clear guidance and a framework to my own learning and teaching practice   | visits, talking, discussing, learning, listening, letters   | Shared learning. highly important - we can't function effectively without each other   | yes when I have been introduced so that the family/carers know who I am and am not being intrusive in someone else's space   | resilience, courage, humour, high standards and expectations, personal strengths, cultural knowledge (shared), excellent teaching and learning skills   |
| it can inform me of different things that I should or had been doing in the schools that I have been teaching at   | I am very positive when I meet parents and the community members - I work with them to get them on board and interested about education (how important it is)   | Engaging with Aboriginal parents. Community is so important because it plays a role in the outcomes of the students we teach. they believe that you are making a difference and care about them  | yes I am confident to engage with Aboriginal parents/carers and community as it is important for understanding what is happening around us                         | partnership, working and understanding needs, being one in yourself, making a difference  |
| clarify and reinforce beliefs and strategies used when planning and working with Indigenous students and parents   | face to face with AIEO or liaison officer, telephone, letter, parent teacher conference at school, social activities (informal), community based activities   | It is an integral part of the teacher/student relationship and support structure. parental and community working with teachers/school to support student development and learning is critical  | yes, but when going into a new community spend time collaborating with those who know as to the most appropriate way to initiate the engagement then build on this | They care about individual development and build a good working relationship. They identify the student's strengths and build on these. Flexible in their approach but fair and firm in their expectation. Build on real life knowledge. respect and value of culture including language    |
| The teacher standards can help us teachers define and identify those techniques, methods and relationships that we are doing well and those that are lacking. This can help us plan for those aspects that are lacking | I regularly do home visits with an AIEO. I send letters of concern and make phone calls. What is lacking, however, is an involvement in more community events and programs outside of school. to build rapport would help | engagement with the community and Indigenous parents means reaching out, being involved, being culturally sensitive and building rapport   | I do not feel I understand enough about Indigenous communities to be adequately culturally sensitive   | someone who is: actively involved with the community, plans and develops contextually relevant opportunities for parents to be involved, is educated in the culture and community they are dealing with, maintains a dialogue with the parents and the members of the surrounding community |
| the standards are a hardcopy and guide on the strategies that I can utilise and implement with my students and relatives   | home visits - meeting the parents in the community at their dwelling, phone calls, general conversations in the community, parent nights  | Very important component of being regarded as a respected teacher in the community. Building a relationship with your student. Being approachable  | Yes, confident in engaging as it allows ability to build relationships. helps to preserve culture and work on respect  | Respect for country and culture. Planning and implementing a classroom curriculum that motivates and inspires your students. listening skills   |

| How can the Teacher Standards assist your role in working with Indigenous students and parents?  | How do you engage with your Indigenous parents and community members?   | What does engagement with Indigenous parents and community mean to you as a classroom teacher and how important is it?  | Are you confident to engage with Indigenous parents/carers and community? Why or why not?  | What are the attributes of a quality teacher working successfully with Indigenous students?  |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| reminds me of areas of strength/weaknesses in myself and others that will enable me to better address them and plan strategies for improvement | I have done daily and ongoing role in relation to improving communication between teachers/staff and community members. This means regular home community visits and the promotion of these among my staff. also have planned for and promoted increased channels of communication through mid-term reviews, parent evenings, students journals etc | very important in establishing a relationship that can be used as a basis for mutual respect/understanding and act as a platform to influence academic achievement, school behaviour, attendance etc in positive ways | yes, generally, however this is something which I've built over a number of years working in Derby and not something that came in my first few years of working here   | A recognition and understanding of the context/culture from which students are coming with an accompanying attitude of having and communication "high expectations" to students and parents/carers. the ability to build respect with students/community |
| will clarify and reinforce what we are doing and where we can go next  | meeting school/home, notes/phone calls, attendance of community events, valuing their ideas/opinions, using their talents   | Very important as if parents and community are involved in the education process it makes it more relevant/worthwhile to students. provides a link between classroom - student-home                                   | Yes, as they are like to hear and see how well their children are doing at school. Parents/carers like to know you are interested in their child's well-being. talking to parents/care givers also helps me to understand their point of view/opinions/ideas | encourage, listen, participate in the community, value the culture, using the children's culture in their learning, tapping into students talents  |
|  | I am involved in an Indigenous community church where education issues are regularly raised & discussed giving me insight into important issues. I am well respected in the community & am sometimes asked to liaise with the school  | I have a good knowledge of the home environment of my students & the impact it may have on their behaviour & learning   | I have a good relationship with the community people at Mowanjam & have learnt from my Indigenous colleagues & community friends the best way to engage with Indigenous parents/carers   | Takes an interest in the student's life outside school. builds up a rapport with students outside the classroom environment, listens to & respects the input of Indigenous colleagues & assistants   |
| re-check, make sure I am doing my very best  | home visits, conversations in the shops/streets, inviting parents into the classroom on a regular basis, planning for activities that involve parent help or involvement  | building relationships, extremely important, keeping parents/community in the loop  | yes - great experiences  | be: culturally aware, respectful, planning for cultural needs, understanding   |
|  | home visits, phone calls, parent nights in school meetings, letters   | I believe that parents and carers need to be actively involved in their child's education. it is highly important for the development and educational advancement of the child  | I am confident, I build relationships with students first, then get parents involved in the education process. I teach every student in the high school , so it can be difficult to communicate with all my students parents/carers                          | relationships, trust/safety, no judgments, high expectations/standards, accountability   |
|  | home visit, letters, phone calls, daily conversations at classroom door, invitations to class events  | It is important to have the parents' on-side for the program that is delivered. I believe better outcomes can be achieved if I can work together with the parents   | Sometimes yes, sometimes no. home visits can be daunting, when a large group of people are gathered at the house and have been drinking. this is an occasional circumstance and mostly I am confident to communicate with parents                            | able to build a rapport, mutual respect, genuine interest in the children  |

| How can the Teacher Standards assist your role in working with Indigenous students and parents? | How do you engage with your Indigenous parents and community members?  | What does engagement with Indigenous parents and community mean to you as a classroom teacher and how important is it?  | Are you confident to engage with Indigenous parents/carers and community? Why or why not?  | What are the attributes of a quality teacher working successfully with Indigenous students?   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
|   | home visits with an AIEO   | very important as it provides a strong support base for the student   |  | patience, persistence, positivity   |
|   | home visits, morning tea, phone calls, taking time in the communities e.g. Woolworths  | As a teacher, shows I am wanting to understand context of children and am interested in their culture. This reflects in positive relationships. Importance - essential. We then have a strong enough relationship to talk honestly about the children.  | Yes, I am not prejudiced or judgmental and have done a considerable amount of work with Indigenous children in Perth.                                  | sense of humour, willingness to learn, flexibility, good behaviour management skills, unconditional love and tolerance  |
|   | Mingle: attend community events, volunteers for a lot of school events. don't be shy   |   | get to know one another, be confident  | understanding, caring, knowledge, don't be shy, ask the question  |
| shows what we are accountable for   | talk, collaborate  | highly important, having the community on-board with educational activities and to help in the planning process   | somewhat - I don't feel that I know enough about their culture to comment  | collaboration with community and parents  |
| give you a framework to develop your career   | keeping parents/carers informed with relevant information  | Having the full support of parent/community. vitally important as it affects the teachers well-being/confidence   | yes  | Patience/tolerance, compassion/enthusiasm, you need a genuine passion to work with Indigenous kids!   |
| keep on track   | invite into school, organise field trips and invite Indigenous people, consult with traditional owners, include Indigenous perspectives                      | present in classroom, able to communicate good and bad  | yes - do so regularly at shops/pool, give lifts/help out, able to acknowledge Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing                              | To be Aboriginal gives the teacher more respect with many of the community. able to acknowledge Indigenous perspectives, able to engage with 'hands on' and interesting tasks that are relevant to them i.e. fishing, football, country |
| parent contact, develop relationships with community/parents which filters down to the students | contact when something goes wrong  | I know it's important but find I have little support/guidance & time to do so.  | no. cultural barriers & safety   | Guidance, compassion, patience!!!   |
|   | yarn with them outside the school, find a connection within a family member, talk a language that they understand  | it's very important to get parents and community so that we are able to work together   | Yes. I'm here as a teacher who wants the best for all students/carers/parents. To be able to work together in improving a better life for our children |   |
|   | Engagement occurs both explicitly in school but also within the community. engage in the context of play-group, home visits, phone calls, special event days | Teachers need to engage with parents & community to learn about their students, to meet their needs, to plan curriculum that is relevant. They need to engage if they want to bring community learning to the school. There is so much knowledge that children bring to school. teachers need to learn from the community to better know the kids | yes - I am confident to engage with parents in the school context but also am frequently in the community  | Quality teachers view each child as an individual. They are aware of children's developmental levels and plan according to those needs. Quality teachers make an effort to get to know their students.                                  |



| How can the Teacher Standards assist your role in working with Indigenous students and parents?   | How do you engage with your Indigenous parents and community members?  | What does engagement with Indigenous parents and community mean to you as a classroom teacher and how important is it?   | Are you confident to engage with Indigenous parents/carers and community? Why or why not?   | What are the attributes of a quality teacher working successfully with Indigenous students?  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
|   | Becoming an active community member myself & being involved in community events, home visits - ensuring I meet the parents of all students in my class at the beginning of the year. inviting parents into the classroom for special events - mother's day, father's day, harmony day, NAIDOC week, and after class assemblies | it's extremely important and the key to making changes and ensuring the students progress, parents being actively involved in decision making and planning for the improved educational outcomes for their students e.g. school council P&C, assisting teachers with special events, reading programs, cultural program etc, parents working alongside & in partnership to be involved in shared decision making | Yes I feel very confident to do this as I am part of the community - DERBY is my home and also I have been at the school for a considerable time. I have been successful in involving and having parents participate in learning programs in my class | a good understanding of Aboriginal culture, someone who is willing to listen and learn to Aboriginal parents and community members, high expectations & clear goals for students, a quality teacher of all students, a person who works with the AIEO's and Aboriginal teachers in the school. Someone who asks for help and also asks lots of questions |
| they can provide a framework against which we can judge our performance   | I engage through phone communications and letters and home visits  | very important but very difficult to achieve with time frames  | yes, I have been able to develop good relationships in the past and present   | patient, caring, firm, high expectations, interested in each student, forgiving  |
| A great start is to know our students and the parents to help with the standards of the teacher. to help with the goals of our students                                   | an advantage of being Aboriginal you can always start a conversation of where you come from and build from there   | very important to gain respect from parents and move forward from there whether its positive or negative   | yes, being Aboriginal myself, I can engage with each parent on a regular basis and I know I can be approachable from each side - + or -   | Just know them and their background and understand where they come from. Very important start.   |
| I'm not sure  | visit homes, welcoming to parents when they do come to school, encouraging parents to come in and participate in community events and engage with all family members on these occasions  | Communication with community and parents often. extremely important as this forms strong basis when teaching our students  | very confident as I have been a part of this community for so long and am really concerned for Aboriginal people in particular  | A good understanding of students and their backgrounds. caring positive personality, knowledge of subject, enthusiasm  |
| as a tool to self-monitor and regulate my practice  | Through my AIEO, home visits, parent evenings, invite parents in for morning teas & target specific learning days such as science week etc, invite them in as much as possible. Building and maintaining relationships at community events/places outside of school. developing a good rapport and being approachable          | As above, and it's very important part of my approach as a teacher. I value the relationships I have with parents and carers, it gives me better insight to work with and build relationships with their children  | Yes, I'm friendly and approachable. I find it easy to build good relationships with people and I ensure that they are ongoing   | understanding of culture, persistence and a desire to make a difference, dedication to curriculum, success and every child as an individual  |
| ensure teachers who go to schools with large numbers of Indigenous students receive appropriate PD and support so they have a clear understanding of their students needs | Attend school functions that involve parent participation, contact parents of students I work with for both. positive and negative reporting of student learning and behaviour   | it takes time to build a relationship, it cannot be rushed and you need to be prepared to stay some distance if you really believe you can and want to contribute  | I am now but it took some time  | patience, understanding of culture, good strong curriculum, positive attitudes and high expectations   |
|   | home visits, personalised written invites to parents events, respectful always, acknowledge them, invite speakers  | engagement would be excellent for students in my class but parents have shown little interest  | yes   | respectful, flexible, approachable, expects high standards   |

| How can the Teacher Standards assist your role in working with Indigenous students and parents?   | How do you engage with your Indigenous parents and community members?  | What does engagement with Indigenous parents and community mean to you as a classroom teacher and how important is it?   | Are you confident to engage with Indigenous parents/carers and community? Why or why not?   | What are the attributes of a quality teacher working successfully with Indigenous students?  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| checking what I should need to be doing and knowing, how I can be the best teacher I can be   | home visits, phone calls   | important for building relationships and involving parents/carers in their children's learning   | I have not had fantastic experiences, but they have not been terrible. I find the parents don't have much to say  | culturally aware, respectful, understanding, plan for them   |
| Myself working towards goals and having a framework to achieve professional. they serve as reminders of the things that are important through the teaching and learning process | Home visits, casual discussions, respectful of all in the communities. invite them in, have meaningful discussions   | Vitally important to develop a relationship through engagement. we can increase attendance develop good behaviours, challenge viewpoints, use as a valuable teacher resource, integrate community - the list goes on | Yes, most of the time and if not I find AIEO's a hugely valuable resource for communication. confidence needs to be pulled out from you to understand your students background and the effort that is first put in is soon repaid | Ability to get along with them and understand them as individuals. Have knowledge of their background, home life and interests. you need to be able to have a laugh and gain their respect to know when to work and when to play |
|   | over the years through sport and music I have got to know lots of locals   | it's a huge part of the being here experience and is very important  | Yes! because I like them  | firm but fair, approachable, tolerant  |
|   | invites into the class for occasions, home visits, phone calls, chatting to them in the community, letters and notes home  | very important, helps you get to know the whole child and value and understand their cultural background which will build relationships but also helps better your planning  | yes, Indigenous education is an interest of mine and the more I engage the more I learn   | respect, friendliness, understanding, flexibility, knowledge   |
| clearly explains your role (duties) as a teacher  | phone calls, letters home, home visits, parent nights  | Without engagement students from the parents & the community the classroom in not supported. it feels disjointed from the community  | yes, I have built those relationships in a social setting, outside of school, netball, basketball, footy, etc   | positive, high expectations, willing to go the extra mile for their students, open to learning from their students   |
| give you ideas of what's involved/required  | I don't  |  | no, no experience having done so - would need assistance  |  |
| it is a statement of expected standards but that is all   | phone, letters, and home visits  | present a positive image of education and build a supportive network of caring individuals around the student that values their learning journey and experiences   | Some, not all. dependent on family circumstances  | Cultural awareness/understanding and everything that makes you a successful teacher to any student. catering for diversity in the classroom  |
|   |  | partnership, cooperation, valued   | yes   | patience, care, knowledge (pedagogy), parents/carers   |
|   | Phone, occasional visits or interviews when they come to parent/teacher evening. e.g. out of 27 students, I had 4 parents visit, one of which did not work at the school | I find it can help with behaviour, however I have also found that some parents are not supportive of teachers, school or education in general  | I am and I have. I would also like support from them  | someone who cares  |
| I need to spend more time going through the document  | I try to make home visits involved in the open days that the school organise. Am involved in camps etc outside class involvement with students.                          | very important and sometimes gets lost because of the business of being a teacher  | At times. depends on the support given by the school e.g. access to AIEO's  | Engage with the students outside the classroom. Show in what they are interested in. understand that some of them are making a massive effort just to attend school.   |

| How can the Teacher Standards assist your role in working with Indigenous students and parents?                             | How do you engage with your Indigenous parents and community members?   | What does engagement with Indigenous parents and community mean to you as a classroom teacher and how important is it?   | Are you confident to engage with Indigenous parents/carers and community? Why or why not?   | What are the attributes of a quality teacher working successfully with Indigenous students?                                     |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| having a general knowledge of the local communities and culture   |   |  | yeah I suppose I am a local and do understand slang and cultural considerations that make speaking to Aboriginal people   | understanding culture   |
| help me set goals and professional standards for my own career  | Involved in cultural gatherings such as funerals and have a number of contacts within the local Indigenous community. I also ask AIEO's regarding particular students                           | Contacting students care givers regarding their performance both positively and negatively. visitation   | Not by myself. I usually go to communities with an AIEO.  | Mother hen quality. Love and lead. grant students a small feel of success to encourage them to achieve better next time         |
| Teacher has to be professional irrespective of student behaviour and parents attitude. standard assists to keep the teacher | visiting their houses and have good relations with parents and explain importance of education and what are your expectations to the parents and explain how we can succeed if we work together | it helps in controlling behaviour issues and improves their participations in the classroom which is for success of classroom teaching   | yes, most times but sometimes we have behavioural problems and parents are not interested in their children's education and so they don't cooperate   | knowing their culture and ways of their learning and their inabilities so that we can work hard to be successful                |
| I don't have the understanding of it to give a response   |   | I believe it is no less or more important that engaging with parents and community as a whole, non-segregated population   | Not overly. this is my first experience working with people who identify as Indigenous  | high standards, consistent, clear routines, recognition but not obsession of/with Indigenous culture                            |
| hopefully positively  | invitation in the class room - to share stories, traditions, etc; regular after school conversations/feedback; open door policy   | This year it has been important for a particular Indigenous student in my class. I, his aunty and admin team are all working together to set behaviour standards for this particular child. he has responded well to this knowing there is a consistent approach and that we are all on the same page and working together | yes, have a great deal of respect and interest in Indigenous culture etc  | consistent and high expectations, understanding acceptance and respect, compassion towards all students and their circumstances |
| not sure  | the same as all parents - with consideration, understanding and respect   | very important - historically, culturally, socially; our Indigenous people are important to Australia and therefore everything we do and discuss should have their perspective   | yes, because it is important to engage with everyone from every background  | respect, care, concern, expect and set high standards, value  |
|   | ring, write, email and talk to parents  | parents being involved with their children   | Would like to do more. not huge experience  | enthusiasm, effort  |
| this will assist me to understand the Indigenous community to build positive and productive relationships                   | NAIDOC week's celebrations provide our community with one week a year of activities e.g. Aboriginal dance, boomerang throwing games. We also have a whole school NAIDOC parade                  | The students in my class are all valued no matter what their background is. Engagement with my parent ensures positive outcomes for my students  | I would like to engage more with the Indigenous community. I would like to have them in my classroom for SOSE lessons but have not had success in finding community members who are able to do this | patience, being caring, understanding, using encouragement to achieve success, being fair, being a good communicator            |

| How can the Teacher Standards assist your role in working with Indigenous students and parents?   | How do you engage with your Indigenous parents and community members?  | What does engagement with Indigenous parents and community mean to you as a classroom teacher and how important is it?   | Are you confident to engage with Indigenous parents/carers and community? Why or why not?                     | What are the attributes of a quality teacher working successfully with Indigenous students?  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| strategies, communications  | meeting, seek their help, respect them and show that respect, mentoring students, T/aide work  | Highly important, as with all parents and community members. I have lived in an Indigenous community and have firsthand experience which has helped me along my journey as an educator | Yes. I respect them. I have earned their respect.   | high expectations, consistency, respect, engage/involve their family/community members   |
|   | In past school related as I do any other parent. Targeting individual child's needs.   | varies depending on school and need  | In present and recent situations, yes.  | sensitivity, energy, communication, willingness to learn, optimism in regard to ability of all children  |
| help me understand what is expected when working with Indigenous students and parents             | We celebrate NAIDOC week and invite Elders in to do art, boomerang throwing, fire lighting etc. we do a unit on bush medicine and Indigenous culture/history. Have an open door policy to all cultures. Indigenous staff to assist students, and invite community members in to talk | I personally learn a lot about the Indigenous culture, home life and what they feel about learning and education   | Yes, I have taught several students in the past and have enjoyed a rewarding and open relationship with them. | showing respect, appreciating differences in learning styles, valuing cultural differences and backgrounds, learning more about Indigenous culture, history, supporting them, caring for them, upholding their special contribution to history, art, science, bush craft |
| give suggestions on how to involve parents  | Participate in school board activities e.g. NAIDOC week. extra support for Indigenous students   | very important as some Indigenous students need 'good' role models   |   | All children given equal opportunities in class. high expectations for all students  |
| guide/reminder when planning/communicating  | Exactly how I engage/involve all parents. welcoming, positive, understanding   | We are a team parent/child/teacher. We need to be to move forward.   | Yes, vast experience.   | flexible, communicative, non-confrontational   |
|   | No current parents. I still talk with all Indigenous/community members from past classes and schools   | There is respect for the school. Attendance at school events. Mutual respect.  | Yes! Lots of experience. I have never felt any different  | open-minded, respectful, a genuine interest in each student  |
| learning more about culture, traditions and beliefs (I am a new/beginning teacher)                | the same as any other parent in my class   | it is very important - engagement brings positivity  | yes, as much as I am confident to speak with any parent in my class   | very similar to a quality teacher for any student - caring, enthusiastic, hard working, listens, know the child and their life, interests etc  |
| Can communicate the standards to the parents as parents and students know what the standards are. | communicate with them as school events and invite them to participate in or contribute to the events, either by being involved physically or emotionally   | it means that non-Indigenous students get to learn about the culture of Indigenous people  | Yes. I have many Indigenous friends who have been a great help to me and the community.                       | understanding the importance of what culture means to the Indigenous students and that education is important on all levels  |

## B.2.2 Continuum Process

### Student Responses

Specific statements are made and participants physically situate themselves along a continuum from Strongly agree to Strongly disagree. The conversations that occur around these statements indicate individual's beliefs and assumptions and facilitate rigorous debate.

#### 1. Statement: I feel I belong in my school

- Majority agreed
  - I like school
  - I come to school so I can get a good job
  - I want to finish year 12
- 4 in the middle
  - unsure as to whether they did belong or not
- 1 disagree
- 1 strongly disagree
  - I don't feel as though I belong because I don't want to be here, I just want to get a trade so I can get a job. The teachers don't care about what I think

#### 2. Statement: I feel valued in my school

- The majority agree
- 4 in the middle
- 3 disagreed
  - didn't feel valued and felt the teachers didn't care

#### 3. Statement: My school makes me feel proud to be Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander

- 1 disagree
  - I'm non Indigenous so I don't feel I can comment
- Strongly agree
  - the school makes the students feel proud of who they were
  - Mostly in the middle, some undecided as to whether it is celebrated others thought it could be done better and more ongoing throughout the year.
  -

#### 4. Statement: Smarter is more important than Stronger

- Majority in the middle
  - You need to be both
- 1 strongly disagreed
  - he believed it is was more important to have a stronger sense of identity

### Check in and Check out

At the beginning and end of each session working with teachers, parents or community a Stronger Smarter Institute ritual known as Checking in and Checking out is enacted to set the values for the processes and ensure everyone is aware their contributions are all equally valued, honoured and accepted.

A comment of a high school student during his check out demonstrates the impact and value of the day's activities –

*"This is really worthwhile and I felt valued because it was the first time the school wanted to know what I thought."*

## Community members – Seven Aboriginal community members participated

### 1. Statement: I feel welcome in my school

- 3 strongly agree
- 2 in the middle
- 2 strongly disagree
  - I just don't feel welcomed. Some teachers make more of an effort than others.

### 2. Statement: Parents and community members want to be involved in their children's education

- Mostly agree
- 2 in the middle
  - Most parents want to but don't know how.
  - They want to but are not
- 2 strongly disagree
  - They could if they really wanted to they can always get a lift into town for other things. It's not about excuses; they have to make the effort.
- 1 participant moved slightly from strongly agrees to agree.
  - Schools and community need to work better together by understanding where each is coming from.

### 3. Statement: Stronger is more important than smarter

- 1 strongly disagree
- 4 were in the middle because they thought both were important
  - School is about getting smarter but you need to be valued for your cultural identity and schools don't do that very well.
- 1 strongly agree
  - Stronger in culture is more important than smarter

### B.2.3 Community Engagement - Quotes

#### What is Community Engagement?

I want parents to have their say so I make a point of not talking too much but listening. I think that this is the most important thing to build relationships with the family to sit and listen to them. It has helped me build relationships with students and it has improved my teaching in the classroom.

*Tassie teacher*

Community engagement is important because we are all a part of the community, we come from the community whether it be remote or the city and we need to have parents of the children engaged with their learning at school to give them self confidence and encourage them to go further, to accept change and not be just satisfied with how they are but be willing to improve and learn more.

*Ritchie - Aboriginal Community Health Worker*

Community engagement is important, the main reason because our students need to see our community behind them in everything that they do along with community comes aunty, uncles, lots of knowledge that the school can't give local knowledge about Derby or Kimberley so the more people we get into the school the better it is for all students.

*Carmen - AIEO*

Community engagement is everybody working together to achieve the best for our students. It is parents in school, people working in shops and us visiting them as well, building up connections- it is making connections.

*Anne - Executive DDHS*

It is working closely with IEWs and being introduced one by one and I would go and meet everyone and build up a relationship and have a laugh and joke together. Community engagement for me is very real and immediate. I had to work hard going beyond just the families in town and going to homes to meet families just to be introduced and saying nothing necessarily about the child so that we know each other's faces and we know each other in town to say hello-that was the first step.

The second step was inviting parents in for morning tea on a one or two people basis not a big group, sharing biscuits and tea with children coming over so we could have a conversation and being very real. If that is too hard and distressing due to past experiences I would take children's work to their home and share that with parents, grandparents and aunties and anyone else who gathered around and was interested in looking. It is also getting involved in events that are happening in their lives. If a baby was born sending a card or if someone passes away sending a letter to say we are really sorry about their loss and that we won't be coming around for a while, building relationships on a personal level on a real level. Taking the kids out on Country with relatives and giving them the chance to shine.

*Anne - Derby DHS*



## C. Fitzroy Valley District High School, Fitzroy Crossing, WA

### C.1 School Overview

Fitzroy Valley District High School is located in Fitzroy Crossing which is situated on the northern bank of the Fitzroy River, approximately 400km east of Broome. The town of Fitzroy Crossing has a population of almost 1500 people. The four main traditional language groups are Bunuba, Gooniyandi, Walmajarri and Wangkatjungka. Three of these languages are taught in the school, forming the Traditional Aboriginal Language (LOTE) program. The school has approximately 270 students across Kindergarten to Year 12. The students come from the many communities along the Fitzroy River Valley. Around 95% of the student cohort is Aboriginal; many have English as their second language. The school has 53 staff, 22 non-teaching support staff and 28 teaching staff. Two advanced skilled deputies and a principal comprise the administration team. The school priorities are Numeracy, Literacy, Attendance and Health and Well-being. The School Mission, encompassing the school motto Strong Minds Strong Culture, is to provide students with the opportunity to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to achieve their full potential and contribute to society

#### C.1.1 School facts 2010

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| School sector    | Government  |
| School type      | Combined    |
| Year range       | K - 12      |
| Total enrolments | 264         |
| Location         | Very Remote |

#### B.1.2 Students 2010

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Total enrolments                       | 264   |
| Girls                                  | 111   |
| Boys                                   | 153   |
| Full-time equivalent enrolments        | 250.6 |
| Indigenous students                    | 92%   |
| Language background other than English | 49%   |
| Student attendance rate                | 62%   |

#### B.1.3 Student Background 2010

| Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) |                |                 |     |                    |
|--|----------------|-----------------|-----|--------------------|
| School ICSEA value                                     |                |                 |     | 694                |
| Average ICSEA value                                    |                |                 |     | 1000               |
| Data source  |                |                 |     | Parent information |
| Distribution of students                               | Bottom quarter | Middle quarters |     | Top quarter        |
| School distribution                                    | 2%             | 0%              | 98% | 0%                 |
| Australian distribution                                | 25%            | 25%             | 25% | 25%                |

*Percentages are rounded and may not add up to 100*

#### B.1.4 Links

My School Data:

<http://www.myschool.edu.au/MainPages/SchoolProfileRep.aspx?SDRSchoolId=410000004149&DEEWRIId=15197&CalendarYear=2010&RefId=FLdqKCbcABOiGrBKblMbTtuPgSeklJk4>

School Website:

[http://www.det.wa.edu.au/schoolsonline/main\\_page.do?displayURL=overview.do&schoolID=4149](http://www.det.wa.edu.au/schoolsonline/main_page.do?displayURL=overview.do&schoolID=4149)

## C.2 Workshop Data

### C.2.1 Continuum Process

| Students  |
|---|
| <p>Students from years 4, 5 &amp; 6 - majority Aboriginal kids and 4 non Indigenous good attendees - They have just done the deadly teacher activity and are outside doing the continuum to elicit responses and stimulate conversations.</p>   |
| <p><b>1. Statement: I feel I belong in my family</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• they all agreed, talking about belonging and what does that mean<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I feel I belong in my school</li></ul></li><li>• Majority in the middle to agree</li><li>• 3 strongly disagreed<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- They felt they belonged at home and associated belonging with family and couldn't associate belonging with school (connectedness)</li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>2. Statement: My school makes me feel proud to be Aboriginal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most of the students agreed (spread out) but agreed we do stuff about culture at school</li><li>• I want to go to school every day so I can be smarter</li><li>• Mostly yes as they wanted to finish school and get a good job</li><li>• 1 disagreed Home makes me feel proud to be Aboriginal</li><li>• A couple of kids standing in the middle<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Some kids go to school because they have to.</li></ul></li><li>• I don't come to school everyday</li></ul> <p><b>3. Statement: My teachers help me</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3 disagree<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I don't need help me because I don't need them to</li></ul></li><li>• majority agreed</li><li>• a new student stood in the middle<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- wasn't too sure had only been at the school for a short time</li></ul></li></ul> |

### C.2.2 Community Engagement

#### Teachers Responses

Responses from teachers (5 available) who were willing to participate and were available after school to work with Dyonne to learn about AITSL Standards and engage in rigorous conversation around the meaning of community engagement for them.

What is Community Engagement?

- Families working together
- Encouragement
- Sharing, support, education
- Cultural activities passing on information
- The school is seen as a safe encouraging and important place
- Parent involvement in education
- Partnerships
- Families feeling valued in their child's education
- more family/ community members wanting to come to school
- open classroom for my students families to feel that they are welcome anytime
- being part of the community, hanging out with the kids/adults learning from them
- changing what we as a school value as 'learning'
- to have more school out in the community
- School staff goes into the community to meet parents and caregivers, they need to go more than once and get feedback from the community. (Teacher and parent from FVDHS)

Community Engagement is:

- Listening
- Partnership
- Respect
- shared values
- understanding
- equality

### C.2.3 Quotes from Workshop Participants

#### What is a deadly teacher?

A deadly teacher is someone who respects you and pays attention to you and looks you in the eye and tells you that you can do it! My teacher said that I could be a role model and I thank that teacher for believing in me.

*Community member from Fitzroy Crossing & AIEO*

A deadly teacher builds relationships with kids, they won't listen to a word you say they will think of you as a nameless Miss or Mr. You have to be a teacher that they want to engage with so you have to listen to them when they tell you about their weekend and go the extra mile and they will know that you care. That is a deadly teacher.

*Corey Bridge, AIEO*

#### Community Engagement

Just because I am a teacher it doesn't give me any special rights to go into an Aboriginal community and expect Aboriginal parents to trust and respect me. I have to earn that trust and respect and that can't be determined by years.

I try to make use of our student services and IEOs to help break down those barriers that I sometimes perceive but to also build on relationships so that I can be a more effective teacher. For example by going out to the river with kids and inviting family and community so that I am on their ground and in their environment and I am the guest...because that is what I am. It is really nice to build those relationships without forcing myself on them and once you do build those relationships I have found with the families they are just so warm and giving and very welcoming and it is a privilege.

*Mandy Teacher (2<sup>nd</sup> Yr at Fitzroy Crossing)*

Community engagement is not something that you do today and tick the box and it's done. Once you start it is ongoing, it's every day and it's everything you do. To me it's about your ability to talk to community and have open and honest conversations...things they may not want to hear but also be open to hearing what they have to say and decide whether you respond defensively or with possibility. It is also recognising the complex challenges we do face when it is not just one community but made up of six. You can't just work with one you have to work with all groups. It is also about knowing who the decision makers and being responsive to them but also be aware of those community members who don't talk up. How do you respond to the needs of the school if you continue to work in the way the school always has without engaging the whole of community?

*Donna Bridge, Principal*

In small and remote places it is not always easy to engage with community out of school. There are not always lots of opportunities so using football, church and youth group to meet families helps build and develop positive relationships. It is really important that teachers are out and about and that they make the effort to talk to people at the shops. When you develop trust and respect and become a familiar face parents feel that they can come up to you to talk because it's a neutral place.

*Graduate Teacher*

Community engagement happens on a number of different levels from the big picture with parents and interagency around town to community engagement at the classroom level.

The relationships between the parents and teachers have developed so strongly that we have seen definite outcomes for children involved.

*Andy – Deputy Principal*

There is a bit of mistrust in the community because the community can develop positive relationships with the children and their families and then you get up and go, you leave the community. (Most teachers have contracts for 2 & 3 years).

*Teacher*

Engaging with community is difficult to define if you don't know what you want. Engaging with is participating at assemblies and decision-making it is a combination of so many things. I need to understand the needs of the community from a community perspective. It's about me door knocking, talking with families about what I see the direction for the school will be and do they think it is the right direction to take and doing that on an individual basis building relationships. I would then do it collectively bringing everyone together to share. For me to expect that community engagement will happen because I want it to is naive at best but also unrealistic. You don't get it without putting in the hard yards..... In 12 months it will look different.

*Donna Bridge, Principal*

Another layer of complexity is being an Aboriginal principal, there are pros and cons. I am afforded things that non-Aboriginal principals aren't but there is an expectation that I am a black face with a white mentality. I still have to put in the hard yards it is very easy to label me with other failures if I don't succeed. It is really challenging because it buys hope for a lot of people. There is the expectation that I will get it right and it is hard to know what is right but you have to know where you want to go.

*Donna Bridge, Principal*

## D. Tullawong State High School, Caboolture, QLD

### D.1 School Overview

Tullawong SHS is a diverse, unified, harmonious community enjoying learning through challenge and success. Our statement of purpose is 'to engage all members of the community in a common vision, in an environment that is dynamic, supportive, positive, collaborative, embracing the principles of REACH'. Our community's focus is the embodiment of our values of respect, encouragement, aspiration, caring and honesty. We are a multicultural school. Tullawong SHS has a vibrant Indigenous culture that has partnerships with the Stronger Smarter Institute, government and non-government agencies and neighboring schools; the purposes of these partnerships are foster high expectations and high outcomes for our Indigenous students. Curriculum offerings at our school cater for all students as exemplified by the number of academic and VET pathways offered are valued equally. Curriculum Programs are constructed to cater for differentiated teaching and learning. Our extension programs in Music, Dance and HPE, afford our community many extra-curricular activities such as eisteddfods, competitions, music, dance and drama troupe performances, expos and open days. Our sporting teams excel in competitions of netball, rugby, futsal and basketball. Parents are actively encouraged to participate in our school life through a variety of activities including parent/teacher reporting, competitions, functions, and information sessions. Our P and C are dedicated to assisting and advising in the provision of the best possible outcomes for our whole educational community.

#### D.1.1 School facts 2010

|                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| School sector    | Government   |
| School type      | Secondary    |
| Year range       | 8 - 12       |
| Total enrolments | 1126         |
| Location         | Metropolitan |

#### D.1.2 Students 2010

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Total enrolments                       | 1126   |
| Girls                                  | 581    |
| Boys                                   | 545    |
| Full-time equivalent enrolments        | 1125.5 |
| Indigenous students                    | 6%     |
| Language background other than English | 0%     |
| Student attendance rate                | 85%    |

### D.1.3 Student Background 2010

| Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) |                |                 |                    |             |
|--|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------|
| School ICSEA value                                     |                |                 | 943                |             |
| Average ICSEA value                                    |                |                 | 1000               |             |
| Data source  |                |                 | Parent information |             |
| Distribution of students                               | Bottom quarter | Middle quarters |                    | Top quarter |
| School distribution                                    | 43%            | 22%             | 23%                | 12%         |
| Australian distribution                                | 25%            | 25%             | 25%                | 25%         |
| Percentages are rounded and may not add up to 100      |                |                 |                    |             |

### D.1.4 Links

My School Data:

<http://www.myschool.edu.au/MainPages/SchoolProfileRep.aspx?SDRSchoolId=310000002188&DEEWRId=15839&CalendarYear=2010&RefId=z%2fBqDSEh%2bNhSANaxZtwuX6%2bEJwSMbUwv>

School Website:

<http://tullawongshs.eq.edu.au/wcms/>



## D.2 Workshop Data

### D.2.1 Continuum Process

#### Parents and Community

**1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students can learn as well as other students**

- One very strongly agree
- One in the middle
- One heading towards agreed, but closer to middle.

Comments:

- We need to employ more support for our students
- Tall poppy syndrome where some of our students don't fully appreciate the hard work that goes into being successful
- We have come a long way but we still have a long way to go
- There needs to be conversations with families about schooling and the importance of going to school everyday

**2. Is this reflected in our school data (not sure of access to school data though they know who has academic success, and attendance and participation rates )**

- No movement
- They talked about the fact that some students really strive but we have to bring the army with us, it is about all students succeeding not just one student.
- It is important for the students need to be responsible for their learning.

**3. To significantly impact on Indigenous student learning it is essential to engage Indigenous parents**

- All strongly agree
- It is important to get valuable and valued input from the community
- If students see parents are interested and involved students will feel valued
- Community involvement leads to students being more involved in their own communities and giving back to community.
- If they see our culture in school mainstream will learn about us , school, at home strong sense of pride in their own culture
- 'Being deadly is being educated'

**4. I feel welcomed in my school**

- 3 agree towards the end
- 1 in the middle she didn't at first now she is connecting with staff and feel more welcomed

Comments:

- We need more Aboriginal worked to help our kids.
- Relevant Programs in the school to get parents in and make them feel relevant

**5. The leadership in my school is actively engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents, carers and community**

- 3 In the middle
- 1 Disagree

Comments:

- Not sure with how the leadership is involved with Indigenous parents or Indigenous education
- Need a couple of weeks notice to organize days like this, you need time to be able to get parents can consult with and inform community.
- Setting up ways to work with Elders
- Student leadership, but their needs to be more opportunities for all Indigenous students to learn from Elders and can bring a friend, once a month gatherings
- The school should not be afraid, we have a culture to share and it can look like men's and women's business to be culturally respectful.
- Identity for all Indigenous students not just the leadership team.
- Recommendation let's get together at least once a month about building up leadership for all

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students...

**6. My child's school works to promote a positive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identity**

- 1 disagrees.
  - I'm sure of protocols within the school but I haven't seen it in action.
- 3 Agree
  - It does promote a positive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity but it is different to doing it.
  - They are failing because they have no recognition, they need to feel safe and supported and there needs to be more work around promoting positive ATSI identity.
  - Torres Strait Islander students felt left out and not necessarily catered for Torres Strait Islander students saying you only support Aboriginal students not Torres Strait Islander students.

**7. Parents and Community members want to be involved in their parents education**

- 2 agree
- Middle

Comments:

- they do want to be involved but don't know how to
- maybe the school doesn't provide enough opportunities
- the school needs to say we want you to be involved to be a part of this
- to make sure there is an open door policy , being more welcoming , some parents are supportive the school needs to open up and saying we want to share this journey with you - with the school saying to parents how can we help you to help your child.
- 1 disagree past mid way
  - Some of the parents say it's your problem not mine, dismiss responsibilities, parents need to be involved and stop making excuses for their kids.
  - School needs to Educate parents that they are welcome and the door is welcome, the fence is a boundary not a barrier the door is always open

**8. Stronger is more important than Smarter**

- 3 agree
  - If you are strong within yourself you can get the smartness along the way
  - It is important to be strong within yourself
  - If you are not strong you can't be successful
- 1 in the middle
  - We need both but you have to be smart to make a choice.

**Student Group**

**This group is the leadership group within the school who have been selected**

**1. I feel I belong in my family**

Some of the responses were very personal and showed deep consideration of the question - honest in sharing the complexity of their own lives

- 5 strongly agreed
- 7 on the fence
  - Only belong to half of my family - I don't have anything to do with the negative side (drugs, criminal behavior) one side that is nurturing
  - struggling to find where I belong pulled between both sides
  - some religious and want me to be like them and others don't want me to be religious
- 3 disagreed and didn't feel they belonged in their family
  - I don't have anything to do with my immediate family they didn't want to know me so I live with my grandparents
  - My family doesn't want anything to do with me so I don't want anything to do with them, I don't want to belong.

**2. I feel I belong in my school**

they really knew and understood the concept of belong

- 5 in the middle
    - I sort of feel as though I belong
    - I come to learn and I hope for the best
    - I'm not sure if I do belong.
    - School can be up and down sometimes you fit in and sometimes you don't
  - 7 strongly agreed
    - because of their friends and my teachers support me
    - friendships and more Indigenous opportunities with the Wandj room
    - has good support educationally and sometimes feel the pressure and sometimes I do things on my own ....I find my social life is not as good as I want it to be, so I stand out from the others. I try to do my best so I study a lot and that's means I am often on my own.
- 3. I feel valued in my school**
- Everyone felt valued
    - the Indigenous leadership group gives you a say in things
    - it's a good school and it helps us through Indigenous programs and the Wandj
    - The teachers care about what we say and change e.g. the kids wanted to go on a camp and the kids helped organize the day and agenda (having something to contribute)
    - I know what it was (in another school where she had a negative experience) like they didn't pay any attention to us Indigenous kids
- 4. My school makes me feel proud to be Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander**
- Majority agreed
    - Programs make you feel proud because there are more Indigenous students they can identify with that group
    - School logo, colors and design has a snake on it and makes them feel welcome
    - Teachers make them feel proud and welcome at the school, special celebrations, career days and opportunities to bring Indigenous kids together.
  - One in the middle
    - she was standing there because she had only been at the school for a short time so she wasn't confident to answer
  - 2 slightly to the left off the middle towards agree
    - He felt he fits in because there is an identifiable group of Indigenous students at my old school there was nothing Indigenous and the only time they knew you were Indigenous is when you had to do a test
- 5. I want to come to school every day so that I can be smarter**
- 4 strongly agree
    - I want to come to school to learn I know that I have to learn to have a good future
    - My family never finished school and I want to be smarter than them
    - I want to learn and get a good job
    - It's about family honour, when I finish year 12 I will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> grandchild to finish, I feel a bit of pressure but I can deal with it but I want to finish.
    - Aiming high but there is not much to do in school but I drive myself to be the best person that I can be, So that I can learn more, get better marks and get a better job when I leave school.
  - 1 agree not strongly
  - 5 in the middle
    - I come to school for social reasons but I want to finish year 12
    - Some days you just don't want to come but you want to succeed so you do
    - Friends are important that gets them to school
  - 3 who disagree (halfway down the continuum)
  - 1 strongly disagree
    - learning is good I just don't like school
- 6. My teachers help me to be the best that I can**
- 6 kids who disagree up near the middle, its more family support not necessarily the teachers, these students saw their family as helping them be the best that they could be
    - my mum tries to help me because she didn't do so good at school
    - some teachers help you

- Sometimes some are racist and send you out for no reason, my parents dropped out in year 10 so I want to finish
- 5 towards middle of agreeing that teachers do help them
- 1 strongly agreed
- 3 agreed but not strongly
  - Some teachers help you to strive and help you to catch up, and let you do whatever you want to be the best that you can be.  
Discussion follows around who are the best teachers the ones who let you do whatever you like or the ones that expect you to work hard and have rules and boundaries in place. all students were in agreement that the best teachers are the ones who make us work hard and help us to be the best we can)
  - teachers do encourage you to be the best
  - they help you not to be dumb
  - support is really good some teachers give really good support
  - they push you to make you go further
- disagree
  - some teachers are just slack , they come in and write on the board and they don't walk around
  - The best teachers were the ones that asked if you needed help and if you did they explained things and helped all of the students.
  - Some just do the job, they don't care they show up and write on the board and think they have done a good job
  - It should be more than a job.
  - One teacher said to a student go back to the dirt where you came from (perceptions and you know they are racist by the things they say and the way they treat you )

## **7. Stronger is more important than Smarter**

- One was halfway towards disagree because he felt smarter was more important
  - Smarter is more important to me because you want to be smarter and get an education, be wise and to get to where I want to be, but I can come back to my culture. I don't worry about some things like what other people think about me, they are just jealous later I will be stronger, I need to be smart to make the right choices
- 8 in the middle
  - Its equal
  - I come to school to be proud and to get a good job
  - You should be strong and smart at the same time
  - You need to be strong to be smart and smart to be strong
  - You have to be proud of who you are and it is way more important than what you have done.
  - You can always get smarter but it is important to be strong
  - You need to be persistent to be stronger and have the strength to carry on and to get past obstacles
  - Courage and strength kept pushing me to be smarter
- 1 towards agree
- 1 strongly agree
- 2 agree

## D.2.2 Community Engagement

### What is Community Engagement?

Discussion at the end of the session with students and community group to gain further insights and definitions of what community engagement actually is.

#### What does Community Engagement mean?

- Family friends
- More than one culture communicate with each other
- Respected
- Aboriginal
- Indigenous and white people don't get involved as much ( not sure if this is referring to whether Indigenous and Non Indigenous people don't get involved together or whether in secondary school parents, carers and community don't get involved much.  
P & C for example, not many parents know about it. 5 parents out of 1000s go to the P & C they have their say.

#### What does Community engagement look like?

- Footy carnival
- NAIDOC kids did cooking for Elders
- Awards attract parents
- Functions that school organize dance and music
- Clean up Australia day
- Anzac March
- Community Action a community group (not Aboriginal )
- Festivals family fun day
- OZtag
- Library at Caboolture has a sacred Indigenous section, is a welcoming place

#### What could the school do to improve Community Engagement?

- Annual BBQ
- Connect with more families
- Bushwalking with primary schools
- Community Indigenous and non Indigenous friends coming together
- Good to get more support
- Have identity points where people can sit and gather and yarn
- Elders can come in and see kid's artwork
- Open up doors and have more pathways

### D.2.3 Visualization Process

#### Student Responses

The student leadership team were brought together to participate in the days Stronger Smarter activities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander students, who have demonstrated high attendance and show potential leadership capabilities, are chosen to become part of this group.

Responses to the visualization activity around think of a deadly teacher you have had and reflect on how they made you feel....

1. Made me feel calm , happy and bright - Tullawong teachers said ‘ walk thru life and see what you find’ AND ‘don’t give up on your dreams ‘
2. At another school I was put into an extension math class. I was really good at math but I have to ask a lot of questions to get it, then when I get it I don’t have to ask questions, this teacher didn’t like me asking questions and made me feel like nothing. Now I hate math and I don’t do it anymore... when I used to be really good at it. Another teacher, my dance teacher, believed in everyone. She believed we could all do better than we had and then we can, most teachers make me feel like this.
3. I had teachers at another school that made me feel like nothing, drawing of a black hole. Then I came here and teachers helped me with my work. They take Indigenous kids seriously! They help Indigenous kids
4. I felt left out at another school , I don’t know how to describe it , I felt like a like a mini volcano inside
5. Picture of the sun and rainbow.
6. My deadly teacher made me have good feelings, I grew up but there was no exit.
7. I didn’t know how to draw angry so I drew a devil
8. when I was in New South Wales I was hit with a wooden ruler and I was too scared to go to school that made me feel no good but here it is positive and it makes pay attention , they treat you the same as the other kids and make it fun.
9. A deadly teacher made me feel happy, bubbly and fun. When it was fun we wanted to do more so we could have fun but learn. Everyone respects you more. If they are nice to us then you get more work done.
10. Deadly teachers make you laugh and say things to you as soon as you come in.
11. My deadly teacher made me feel welcomed she made me feel stronger and didn’t make me feel bad... She noticed me.
12. When you are welcomed there is a sense of belonging
13. It is good when they don’t have favorites and you don’t feel like you get cancelled out.
14. Flowers primary school teachers made me feel comfortable. Most of the teachers make me feel happy and make me laugh

#### D.2.4 Quotes from Workshop

##### Visualizing a positive teacher

###### Kim – Parent and Teacher Aide

- Picture with love hearts
- Kind to me
- He would take me to learning support
- ‘made me feel like I was somebody and he helped me through primary school’
- Made me feel like learning was really important... I still got that feeling today
- positive memories
- When I walked into school here the supervisor made me feel comfortable, greeted me well, Hello Kim like I was actually somebody ‘
- Mum always told me mainstream is good you can learn a lot off of them too, so I sometimes go through the mainstream jobs not the blackfulla jobs

###### Brad – Aboriginal teacher

- Talked of significant people in his life who had believed in him and encouraged him to take different paths.
- Accepting, supportive and caring in and outside the classroom
- Valued in what I am trying to achieve an acceptance of me... always yarning but listening too

###### Aunty Faye

- Spoke of the experiences she had at school and how they were being prepared to become domestics and that what they did.
- Bright kids became role models and one teacher taught them the difference between Aboriginal English and Standard Australian English (SAE) and from that day she understood they were two different languages, Mission English and SAE.



## **E. Casino Stronger Smarter Learning Communities Schools**

### **E.1 Casino Public School, Casino, NSW**

#### **E.1.1 School Overview**

Casino Public School is located on the North Coast of NSW in a township that is entirely surrounded by a rural shire. The school is situated within 500 metres of the town centre, within easy walking distance to the swimming pool, parks, the town library and sporting fields. The school was established in 1861. Over 60% of students travel to the school by public transport and 15% are within walking distance of the school. There are 590 students enrolled in twenty two regular classes, four Support Unit classes and the Aboriginal Preschool. Aboriginal students make up 17% of the school's total enrolment. We work closely with local the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group. Casino Public School provides a caring, happy and safe educational environment where children can learn and develop as individuals. Our school has a focus on literacy and numeracy with an emphasis on individual learning programs. Effective and extensive support programs are developed for children with identified special needs. These programs are monitored by an experienced learning support team. Our school encourages students, parents, staff and the wider community to work together as a team to enhance the learning experiences of all students. We do this through effective teaching, a positive environment, good discipline and community participation. Students, parents and teachers work together to promote our school expectations of safety, respect, responsibility and cooperation. The school award system is used by staff to recognize and reward students who are following school expectations in the classroom and school settings. We are well resourced and provide students access to the latest technologies. We provide an educational environment that applies information technology effectively, develops sporting and performing arts skills, and allows for valuable cultural experiences and a positive approach to school life. At Casino Public School you can expect: quality literacy, numeracy and technology programs from preschool to Year 6; individual student learning needs to be met; air-conditioned learning spaces; an interactive whiteboard and computers with internet access in every classroom; great extra-curricular activities; band, choir, dance and sport; on-site preschool; active student leadership; state of the art classrooms and learning spaces (current major building and refurbishment program). We are proud members of the 'Hub of Summerland Learning Community', a group of schools committed to working together, 'Giving opportunities, excellence and success' for all students. Our involvement in the National Partnerships has further enhanced our capacity to impact positively on the social, emotional and educational outcomes for students. Please don't hesitate to contact us to find out more information about the great opportunities our school offers. You are welcome to visit the school.

### E.1.2 School facts 2010

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| School sector    | Government |
| School type      | Primary    |
| Year range       | P - 6      |
| Total enrolments | 552        |
| Location         | Provincial |

### E.1.3 Students 2010

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Total enrolments                       | 552 |
| Girls                                  | 282 |
| Boys                                   | 270 |
| Full-time equivalent enrolments        | 552 |
| Indigenous students                    | 22% |
| Language background other than English | 1%  |
| Student attendance rate                | 93% |

### E.1.4 Student Background 2010

| Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) |                |                 |                    |             |
|--|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------|
| School ICSEA value                                     |                |                 | 867                |             |
| Average ICSEA value                                    |                |                 | 1000               |             |
| Data source  |                |                 | Parent information |             |
| Distribution of students                               | Bottom quarter | Middle quarters |                    | Top quarter |
| School distribution                                    | 68%            | 14%             | 9%                 | 9%          |
| Australian distribution                                | 25%            | 25%             | 25%                | 25%         |

*Percentages are rounded and may not add up to 100*

### E.1.5 Links

My School Data:

[http://www.myschool.edu.au/MainPages/SchoolProfileRep.aspx?SDRSchoolId=1100535\\_1526&DEEWRId=9732&CalendarYear=2010&RefId=IBKnCNBzL2aFITUJTcbc0qco8%2fyVkhOs](http://www.myschool.edu.au/MainPages/SchoolProfileRep.aspx?SDRSchoolId=1100535_1526&DEEWRId=9732&CalendarYear=2010&RefId=IBKnCNBzL2aFITUJTcbc0qco8%2fyVkhOs)

School Website:

<http://www.casino-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/>

## E.2 Casino High School, Casino, NSW

### E.2.1 School Overview

Casino is a rural town located on the north coast of New South Wales. The core expectations of the school are showing respect, being cooperative, being safe, being responsible and to be a learner. Casino High School is a socially and culturally responsible learning community with a high regard for equity. Our equity programs are delivered through the Priority Schools Program. The school offers a very broad curriculum, including an extensive vocational education program. Casino High School provides significant opportunities for performance and exhibition in the creative and performing arts area. The school provides many opportunities to succeed beyond school, with close partnerships with Griffith, New England and Southern Cross universities. The number of students entering university through early entry has been gradually increasing over the past few years. Casino High School enjoys an excellent relationship with its community and through its welfare programs has established a reputation as a caring and supportive school. We have a strong tradition of sporting success in both individual and team pursuits

### E.2.2 School facts 2010

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| School sector    | Government |
| School type      | Secondary  |
| Year range       | 7 -12      |
| Total enrolments | 714        |
| Location         | Provincial |

### E.2.3 Students 2010

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Total enrolments                       | 714   |
| Girls                                  | 347   |
| Boys                                   | 367   |
| Full-time equivalent enrolments        | 711.4 |
| Indigenous students                    | 16%   |
| Language background other than English | 2%    |
| Student attendance rate                | 85%   |

### E.2.4 Student Background 2010

| Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) |                |                 |     |                    |
|--|----------------|-----------------|-----|--------------------|
| School ICSEA value                                     |                |                 |     | 893                |
| Average ICSEA value                                    |                |                 |     | 1000               |
| Data source  |                |                 |     | Parent information |
| Distribution of students                               | Bottom quarter | Middle quarters |     | Top quarter        |
| School distribution                                    | 70%            | 14%             | 10% | 5%                 |
| Australian distribution                                | 25%            | 25%             | 25% | 25%                |

*Percentages are rounded and may not add up to 100*

### E.2.5 Links

My School Data:

[http://www.myschool.edu.au/MainPages/SchoolProfileRep.aspx?SDRSchoolId=1100535\\_8154&DEEWRId=9731&CalendarYear=2010&RefId=IBKnCNBzL2bZGwTyc7ety29qVdKpQT6E](http://www.myschool.edu.au/MainPages/SchoolProfileRep.aspx?SDRSchoolId=1100535_8154&DEEWRId=9731&CalendarYear=2010&RefId=IBKnCNBzL2bZGwTyc7ety29qVdKpQT6E)

School Website: <http://www.casino-h.schools.nsw.edu.au/>

## E.3 Casino West Public School, Casino, NSW

### E.3.1 School Overview

The school is a cohesive community with a total commitment to the value of learning of all members. The school emphasises the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and relationship building, treats all students, parents and teachers with honesty, courtesy and care and has a high expectation of student achievement. The parents and staff of Casino West Public School are committed to creating a caring, safe environment in which students can learn and grow to achieve their full potential. Students are encouraged to become productive and effective members of our society through a wide variety of rich academic, social and cultural experiences. The school community plays an active role in determining school priorities and organisational structures. They also make a significant contribution to student learning through the provision of resources and in supporting classroom learning and student welfare initiatives

### E.3.2 School facts 2010

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| School sector    | Government |
| School type      | Secondary  |
| Year range       | 7 -12      |
| Total enrolments | 714        |
| Location         | Provincial |

### E.3.3 Students 2010

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Total enrolments                       | 714   |
| Girls                                  | 347   |
| Boys                                   | 367   |
| Full-time equivalent enrolments        | 711.4 |
| Indigenous students                    | 16%   |
| Language background other than English | 2%    |
| Student attendance rate                | 85%   |

### E.3.4 Student Background 2010

| Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) |                |                 |     |                    |
|--|----------------|-----------------|-----|--------------------|
| School ICSEA value                                     |                |                 |     | 893                |
| Average ICSEA value                                    |                |                 |     | 1000               |
| Data source  |                |                 |     | Parent information |
| Distribution of students                               | Bottom quarter | Middle quarters |     | Top quarter        |
| School distribution                                    | 70%            | 14%             | 10% | 5%                 |
| Australian distribution                                | 25%            | 25%             | 25% | 25%                |

*Percentages are rounded and may not add up to 100*

### E.3.5 Links

My School Data:

[http://www.myschool.edu.au/MainPages/SchoolProfileRep.aspx?SDRSchoolId=1100535\\_5166&DEFWId=9733&CalendarYear=2010&RefId=IBKnCNBzL2aZEa%2fm5Ja0CYX3S5zAnTay](http://www.myschool.edu.au/MainPages/SchoolProfileRep.aspx?SDRSchoolId=1100535_5166&DEFWId=9733&CalendarYear=2010&RefId=IBKnCNBzL2aZEa%2fm5Ja0CYX3S5zAnTay)

School Website: <http://www.casinowest-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/>

## E.4 Workshop Data

### E.4.1 Continuum Process

#### Community Members from Casino High School, Casino West Public School, Casino Public School Including Aboriginal education workers, parents and grandparents.

##### 1. Statement: I feel welcome in my school

- Majority agreed
- 2 Strongly disagreed
  - I feel welcomed at the school and the principal is great and welcoming
  - I feel welcomed there the staff are lovely and (Michael the principal) has a heart as big as the world.
  - Teachers are just friendly and we have conversations with the principal and he doesn't just walk past me
  - Staff are friendly towards parents it is a safe place it is like a family.
  - Mother of 5 children it is only in the last 5 years that I have felt comfortable, I have teacher's phone numbers and when I ring them they ring you back. I have their mobile numbers and they call me at home and we have conversations. The rapport has come a long way
- Disagree
  - I don't have the feeling that the school is welcoming, I don't get that.
  - Staff have changed and teachers should be more welcoming to parents
  - A lot of the teachers just walk past you with angry faces and they don't even give you a smile
  - The atmosphere is different at this school, not a smile from anyone, it is not friendly we want to see things happen

##### Notes –

- Casino West Parents and Community members have consistently commented on how welcoming the school is
- Casino Public School seemed as though some teachers and some administrators were extremely friendly and welcoming but that was not the experience for everyone. This could have been due to a considerable changeover of staff and the relationships hadn't been established (work to be done there)
- Casino High School it is difficult to comment, long history associated with the experiences of some of the parents and the handling of complex situations

##### 2. Statement: The leadership in my school is actively engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and community.

- Majority agree
  - There are many positive changes since we have a new principal so staff are afraid about what to say and are concerned about misunderstandings which impacts on communication.
  - The leadership has changed

##### 3. Statement: My child's school works to promote a positive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identity

- Majority agreeing
  - A lot of parents were coming more involved due to the celebrations, NAIDOC and other special events.
  - They have to learn to teach Aboriginal children and give them time, I haven't seen a good report for any Aboriginal student in my time
- Strongly disagreed
  - teachers need to relax and learn more about Aboriginal culture

### Casino Schools Students from across all 3 schools

#### **1. Statement: I feel like I belong in my family what does belonging mean to you**

- All Strongly agree
  - I love my family
  - Acceptance
  - Supported always there for you.
  - Being together no matter what happens
  - Part of something that you know is important to you
  - Up and downs and in those moments you sometimes don't feel like you belong.

#### **2. Statement: I feel like I belong at my school**

- Most Strongly agree
  - I'm awesome.
  - Everybody belongs when everyone communicates with you.
  - I think I belong in my school because of my friends and teachers and the things they teach us
  - The surroundings feel right
- Some Disagree
  - I only like doing 2 bits of work and that makes me feel like I don't belong.
- Few Middle
  - Some moments when people bully you or if you are poor or rich

#### **3. Statement: At my school we celebrate being Aboriginal everyday**

- Most Strongly disagree
  - I don't think we celebrate we
  - People underestimate the power of language and it can be hurtful
  - It is proud to be Aboriginal... but you don't have to celebrate it every day.
- 1 Agreed, I'm proud
  - Personally I celebrate being Aboriginal every day.

#### **4. Is there strong parent engagement in our school**

- All Middle
  - Engagement means interacting, Coming together and helping.

### E.4.2 Never Ending Conversation

A conversation is started where each participant adds to the previous persons comment creating an ongoing dialogue around what is community engagement and why is it important

| Group of students from all the Casino Schools  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>What is parent and community engagement in education?</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Getting involved</li><li>• Coming together, everybody joining in.</li><li>• Show that care in peoples education, people that get involved</li><li>• Doing your best</li></ul>  |
| <b>How do you know when the community is getting involved?</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Changes</li></ul>  |
| <b>If I went in to classrooms how would I know they are welcome?</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eye contact</li><li>• Different roles</li><li>• Asking for help</li><li>• Parents in roles like teachers aides</li></ul>   |
| <b>How are parents engaged, what do they do to help?</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helping with homework, projects</li><li>• Questioning they will give you a response</li></ul>  |
| <b>Has there been any time in your schooling when you think there was a fantastic example of people being involved in your school?</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assemblies present awards</li><li>• Parent teacher nights</li></ul>  |
| <b>How does your family like to be engaged?</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They like to know what is going on in schools</li><li>• Read reports</li><li>• Reading newsletters and communication</li><li>• Ringing the school up</li><li>• They would like to hear when things are going well.</li></ul>   |
| <b>What happens at school that you would like your family to know about?</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It would be good if parents helped out with school sports</li></ul>  |
| <b>What about NAIDOC week?</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Celebration</li><li>• Parents come in</li><li>• Classes where different people are doing different activities, community involved</li><li>• Community morning tea</li></ul>  |
| <b>Is there any times when the school goes out into the community?</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We went down the street</li><li>• We went to heritage park some students went over with the teachers to a celebration day</li><li>• Families coming to school.</li><li>• Q E deadly days - all schools came together</li></ul> |

**What makes it hard for families to be involved?**

- Work.
- Distractions in life!! (A lot of things that take people away.)
- Dealing with other people's problems
- Transport
- Work times
- Difficulties with young children

**What is the best thing for you about having your family involved**

- The support they give you
- Love
- Support you in your learning
- Encouragement
- Encourage you
- They can help
- Making time for you
- They support you
- They give up other things to spend time with you.

**What does support mean, How do they support you?**

- They try to help you with different things, homework
- Buying you pencils and pens etc
- Problems in life
- Emotional problems with (bullies adults can speak up for us if we feel we are not being heard)
- Support you for getting to schools and home
- They might take you far away when you are representing your region
- Supporting
- Helping you make your goals happen

**When you have new teachers come to your school is there anything the community does to Introduce them?**

- Welcome them
- Giving them morning tea.



### E.4.3 Community Engagement

#### What is Community Engagement?

Part of the never ending conversation to establish what is community engagement – a process where conversation stays on topic of what is community engagement and everyone add comments and builds on what the previous person has said.

- Community and parents coming together as one with the school
- This is the first time I have seen a grandchild introduce their grandmother to his teacher (at the morning tea as part of the SS day.)
- Community engagement is Aboriginal family values included
- Every parent is different and school needs to come out to be with the community.
- Teachers need to get involved in the community
- It just takes 5 minutes in the classroom to make a connection with the teacher.
- I was brought up on a mission where we had closeness and connectedness and when you come to town it is not the same everyone is spread out, we need to visit those kids to show we care and encourage them to go to school making our community strong again... if we can be stronger as a community by remembering what it used to be like, everyone looking out for each other and be more like that the community is better placed to work with the school.
- Strong sense of community, closeness and connectedness that can extend to the school
- School is a happy place and home is not always happy, acknowledging the complexities of kid's lives and how this impacts on the students when they come to school, teachers need to have some understandings and awareness of the complexities.
- Relationships with teachers, parents need to take the time to establish relationships and sport is a good way to.
- Talking about the difference it makes when people make the effort, teachers seek you out in the playground to connect and build relationships.

## F. Survey Implement

### National Professional Standards for Teachers & The Stronger Smarter Institute

#### Self Reflection



Name:

School:

Position:

Number of Years Teaching:

Are you Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander:

Have you attended the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program:

Please circle where you are placed on the continua for career stage and answer each question about your understanding of the National Standards for Teachers.

|                     |                       |                        |                      |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Graduate            | Proficient            | Highly<br>Accomplished | Lead                 |
| _____               | _____                 | _____                  | _____                |
| No<br>understanding | Some<br>understanding | accomplished           | highly<br>Accomplish |
| 1                   | 2                     | 3                      | 4                    |

#### **Standard 1- Professional Knowledge**

##### 1.4 Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

*As a classroom teacher I demonstrate broad knowledge & understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity & linguistic background on the education of students from Indigenous backgrounds.*

|       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 1     | 2     | 3     | 4     |

I design & implement effective teaching strategies that are responsive to the local community & cultural setting, linguistic background & histories of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander students.

|       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 1     | 2     | 3     | 4     |

**Standard 2- Know the content and how to teach it**

2.4 Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians

As a classroom teacher I demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of & respect for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures & languages

1 2 3 4

*I provide opportunities for students to develop understanding of & respect for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures & languages.*

1 2 3 4

**Standard 3-Professional Practice**

3.7 Engage parents/carers in the educative process

I use a broad range of strategies for involving parents/carers in the educative process

1 2 3 4

I plan for appropriate & contextually relevant opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in their children's learning.

1 2 3 4

**Standard 7- Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community**

7.3 Engage with the parents/carers

*As a classroom teacher I use strategies for working effectively, sensitively & confidentially with parents/carers*

1 2 3 4

I establish & maintain respectful collaborative relationships with parents/carers regarding their children's learning & well-being

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
|---|---|---|---|

How can the Teacher Standards assist your role in working with Indigenous students and parents?

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How do you engage with your Indigenous parents and community members?

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What does engagement with Indigenous parents and community mean to you as a classroom teacher and how important is it?

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Are you confident to engage with Indigenous parents/carers and community? Why or why not?

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---

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What are the attributes of a quality teacher working successfully with Indigenous students?

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Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire



## G. Analysis of Survey Data

### G.1 Comparison between Derby District High school and Wavell Heights State School

#### G.1.1 Years teaching across schools

Despite the difference in sample sizes, you can see from looking at Tables 1 and 2 alone the discrepancy between the number of years teaching at each school, Wavell Heights demonstrating greater mean teaching experience. The fact Wavell Heights has a high standard error (relative to Derby) is possibly telling – the variation in the sample, while greater, indicates a wider variety of years of teaching (something supported by the median and mode provided). Compare this to Derby's descriptive where the mode is 2 years, the median is 4.25 years, and the standard error is much lower (relatively speaking) demonstrating the number of young, inexperienced teachers at Derby.

In short, there are a few significant outliers skewing the overall descriptive of mean years of teaching experience at Derby. Without these taken into consideration during analysis, the results are significantly different again. Notably, Derby has eighteen teachers with 3 years or less teaching experience, compared to Wavell Heights' one (with their next lowest at 9 years and all others 10 and above).

| <i>Table 1.</i>                    |          |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| <i>Wavell Heights Descriptives</i> |          |
| Mean                               | 18.3     |
| Standard Error                     | 2.989054 |
| Median                             | 18.5     |
| Mode                               | 12       |
| Standard Deviation                 | 9.452219 |
| Range                              | 27       |
| Minimum                            | 3        |
| Maximum                            | 30       |
| Sum                                | 183      |
| Count                              | 10       |

| <i>Table 2.</i>           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| <i>Derby Descriptives</i> |          |
| Mean                      | 8.623889 |
| Standard Error            | 1.7045   |
| Median                    | 4.25     |
| Mode                      | 2        |
| Standard Deviation        | 10.227   |
| Range                     | 40       |
| Minimum                   | 0        |
| Maximum                   | 40       |
| Sum                       | 310.46   |
| Count                     | 36       |

However, this is not to say that Derby does not have teachers with experience, just that they have an inordinate number of teachers with minimal experience (N.B. this should be expected). Table 3 below shows that of those teachers (there are 12) with more than 9 years experience, the mean is 20.75 years, the median is 19.5 years, and the mode is 23 years, figures comparable with Wavell Heights overall teaching group. Further comparison demonstrates that, despite an Indigenous population of 8% (approximately 31 students), Wavell Heights has had no one attend the SSLP, nor were there any teachers who identified as Indigenous within the survey. Related to this, according to the Wavell Heights 2010 Annual Report, there was less than five Indigenous staff.

It is difficult to ascertain what exactly the subjective self-responses to the survey questions on engagement (i.e. questions 2, 3 and 4 of the free-response section) mean – interpretation is left to the reader. For example, in response to the question “*How do you engage with your Indigenous parents and community members?*” several respondents from Wavell Heights have indicated that they “...treat the Indigenous community in the same way they would treat the non-Indigenous community...”. Responses such as this pose several potentialities and difficulties; several possibilities are apparent in the context – one being a possible lack of identification of the relevance of the cultural context in which engagement is made (even in an urban setting), while another is the issue of socially desirable responding i.e. to appear egalitarian, something that potentially ignores the importance of the cultural context in which engagement is made. There may also be other factors at play.

Table 3.

*Derby – teaching experience above 9 years*

|                    |          |
|--------------------|----------|
| Mean               | 20.75    |
| Standard Error     | 2.646109 |
| Median             | 19.5     |
| Mode               | 23       |
| Standard Deviation | 9.166391 |
| Sample Variance    | 84.02273 |
| Kurtosis           | 0.205446 |
| Skewness           | 0.71988  |
| Range              | 31       |
| Minimum            | 9        |
| Maximum            | 40       |
| Sum                | 249      |
| Count              | 12       |

Table 4.

*Years teaching of those who don't feel confident engaging community - Derby*

|                    |          |
|--------------------|----------|
| Mean               | 3.428571 |
| Standard Error     | 1.172241 |
| Median             | 3        |
| Mode               | 3        |
| Standard Deviation | 3.101459 |
| Sample Variance    | 9.619048 |
| Kurtosis           | 0.573944 |
| Skewness           | 1.034326 |
| Range              | 9        |
| Minimum            | 0        |
| Maximum            | 9        |
| Sum                | 24       |
| Count              | 7        |

### G.1.2 How does this teaching inexperience affect community engagement, Does it?

There is a potential disjunct between the standard and the associated qualitative response, with scale results on Professional Teacher Standard 3.7 (to use as an example) not necessarily being reflected in the free-response feedback about confidence in engaging community. All Wavell Heights' respondents stated that they were confident to engage with the Indigenous community, with only one respondent declining to answer this question. This is in contrast to Derby where one quarter of respondents stated they didn't feel confident or comfortable engaging with the community. This is probably related to the differing environments and contexts within which the teachers are operating and is possibly expected. As Table 4 insinuates, a relative lack of teaching experience appears to go hand in hand with the lack of confidence in community engagement. This goes hand in hand with scale ratings on the two standards (3.7 & 7.3) that focus on engagement of the community, with both having a mean rating around 2.3, or just above "*some understanding*".

As Table 5 demonstrates, the mean years of teaching experience is around 9 for those who state they are confident in their ability to engage the community. However, there are (as per previous Derby data) a few significant outliers whose years of teaching experience tend to skew the data a little. Accordingly, the median is significantly lower at 5, and the most common number of years experience is only 2. Accordingly, the validity of the results should be examined more closely to determine more precisely what criteria the two groups differ on. Additionally, mean scale ratings are practically identical for "confident to engage community" group ( $M = 2.35$ ) as the "not confident" group on National Professional Standard 3.7, and only marginally higher for 7.3 ( $M = 2.8$ ).

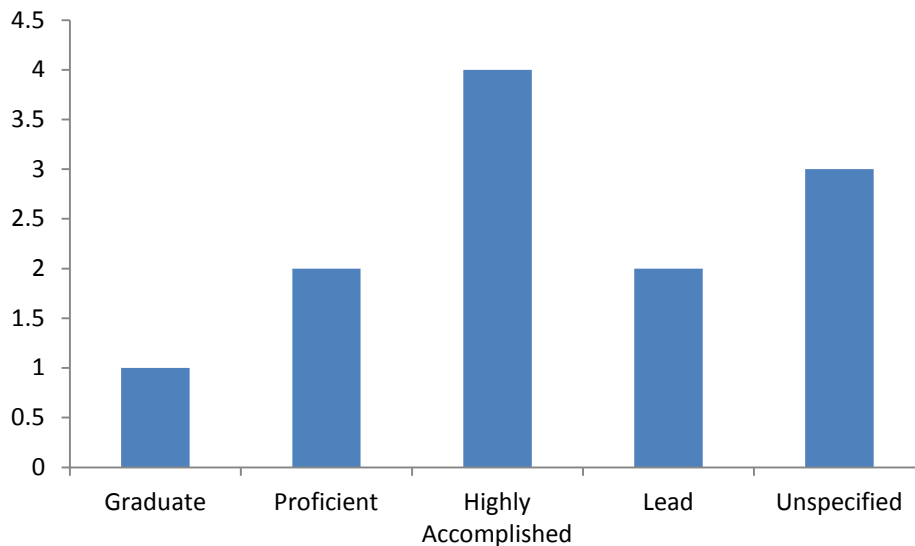
*Table 5.*

| <i>Years teaching of those who feel confident<br/>engaging community - Derby</i> |          |
|--|----------|
| Mean   | 9.159286 |
| Standard Error   | 1.975071 |
| Median   | 5        |
| Mode   | 2        |
| Standard Deviation   | 10.45109 |
| Sample Variance  | 109.2254 |
| Kurtosis   | 1.474969 |
| Skewness   | 1.41441  |
| Range  | 39.5     |
| Minimum  | 0.5      |
| Maximum  | 40       |
| Sum  | 256.46   |
| Count  | 28       |

## H. National Professional Standards - Wavell Heights State School, 2011 Cohort Data & Results

### H.1 Descriptives

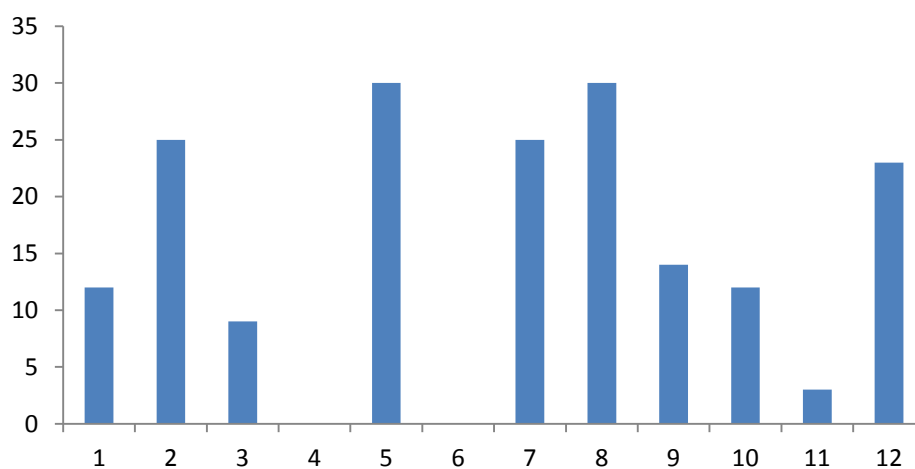
#### H.1.1 Career Stage



*Figure 1: Teacher frequency by career stage*

#### H.1.2 Teaching experience

In the context, Table 2 demonstrates a moderately large standard deviation. This generally indicates that there is a large amount of variation in the sample and that it is a relatively small sample. Two candidates did not enter their teaching experience, but there are no significant outliers. The general balance in the sample is reflected in the relative proximity of the mean and median to each other, with the mode not too far behind.



*Figure 2: Teaching experience in years*



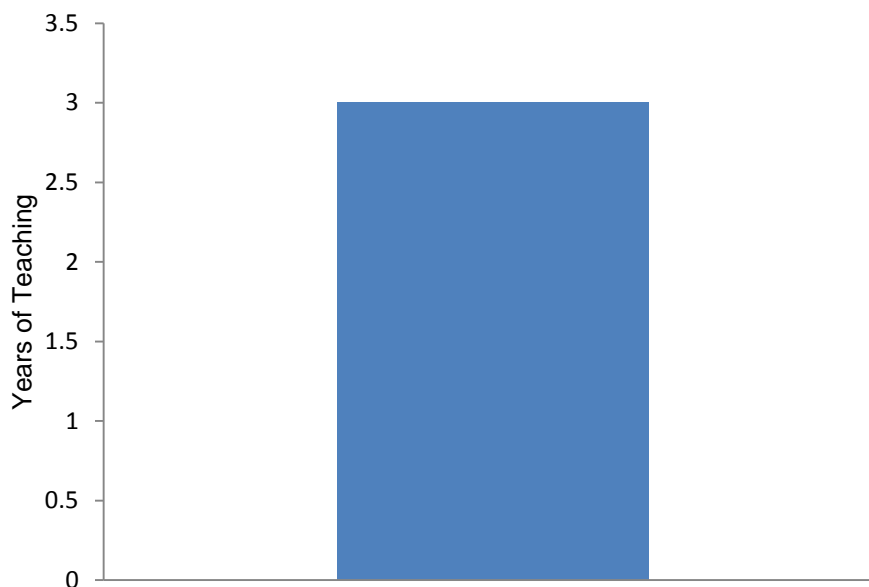
*Table 1.*

*Wavell Heights Years of Teaching Experience*

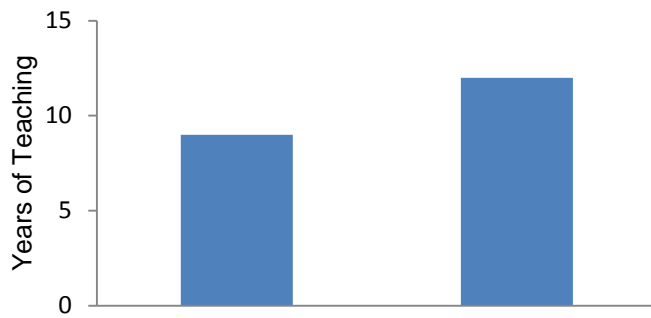
|                    |          |
|--------------------|----------|
| Mean               | 18.3     |
| Standard Error     | 2.989054 |
| Median             | 18.5     |
| Mode               | 12       |
| Standard Deviation | 9.452219 |
| Range              | 27       |
| Minimum            | 3        |
| Maximum            | 30       |
| Sum                | 183      |
| Count              | 10       |

### H.1.3. Comparison of career stage (subjective response) vs. Years of experience

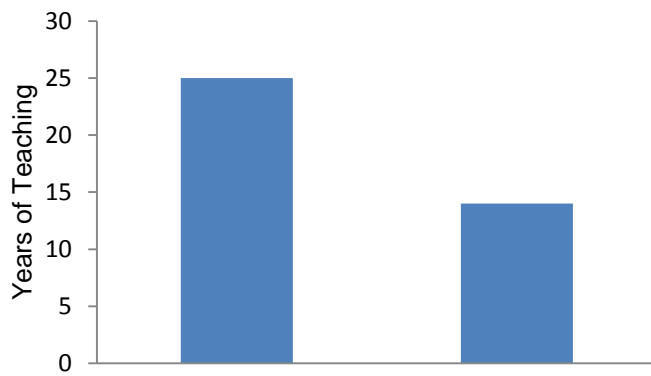
Figures 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 demonstrate participants subjective, self-rating of where they consider themselves to be on a continuum (consisting of the ratings “Graduate”, “Proficient”, “Highly Accomplished”, and “Lead”). However, the lack of clear criteria for each rating lends itself to ambiguity. While not necessarily attributable to this, Figure 7 demonstrates a potentially questionable response (i.e. participant considers themselves a graduate after three years of teaching experience). However, no other such discrepancies exist across the other continuum ratings.



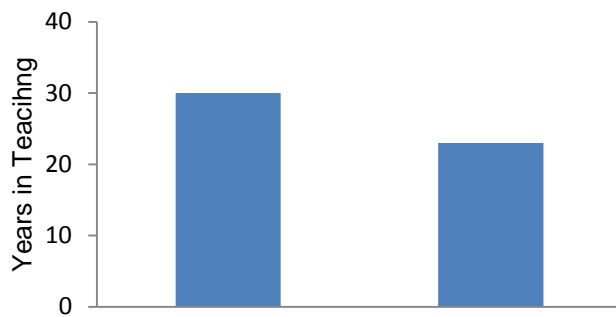
*Figure 3: Teaching experience at Graduate level*



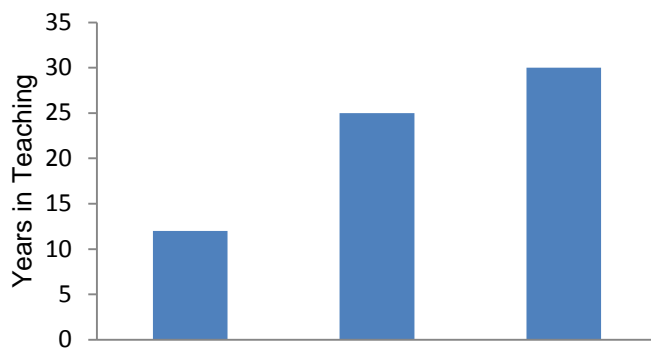
*Figure 4: Teaching experience at Proficient level*



*Figure 5: Teaching experience at Highly Accomplished level*



*Figure 6: Teaching experience at Lead level*



*Figure 7: Teaching experience at unspecified level*

#### H.1.4. National Professional Teacher Standards – mean ratings

Below are the mean ratings for the overall, aggregated scale, each individual sub-scale and the number of years teaching experience. From here, it is apparent that Wavell Heights score higher on the NPTS aggregated scales and subscales in comparison to Derby. The cause of this is difficult to determine at this preliminary stage, however less experienced teachers, younger teachers and differing educational, social and environmental circumstances (potentially altering perceptions of ability to engage community) are all factors that should be considered. There may also be other related and causative factors not considered in this analysis.

*Table 4.*

*Subscale Descriptives - cohort*

|                        | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation | N  |
|------------------------|------|-------------------|----|
| Number of years worked | 18.3 | 9.45              | 10 |
| Standard 1.4           | 2.58 | 0.66              | 12 |
| Standard 2.4           | 3.15 | 0.68              | 12 |
| Standard 3.7           | 2.94 | 0.76              | 12 |
| Standard 7.3           | 3.35 | 0.71              | 12 |

*Table 5.*

*Aggregated Subscale Descriptives - cohort*

|                                  | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation | N  |
|----------------------------------|------|-------------------|----|
| Number of years worked           | 18.3 | 9.45              | 10 |
| Mean Rating across all Standards | 3.01 | 0.57              | 12 |

#### H.1.5. Correlation

Tables 6 and 7 indicate all significant and non-significant correlations between the number of years teaching experience and each sub-scale, and the number of years teaching experience and the aggregated mean of each sub-scale respectively. As the tables indicate, no significant correlation was found between years teaching and mean scale ratings. Additionally, no significant correlation was found between years teaching and any of the National Professional Standards subscales. However, it should be noted that the correlation between Years Teaching and Standards 1.4 approached significance; given the sample size ( $N = 12$ ), it's possible the group is too small to determine significance. Accordingly, as there were no significant correlations across these factors, no correlations have been graphed. Additionally, though they do exist in this sample, no significant correlations between the standards themselves have been graphed (see Table 6) - these are probably outside the scope and context of this particular analysis.

Table 6:

*Correlations between number of years worked and mean National Teacher Standard ratings by subscale – all groups*

|                              | Number of<br>years worked | Standard<br>1.4 | Standard<br>2.4 | Standard<br>3.7 | Standard<br>7.3 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Number of<br>years<br>worked | -                         | .61             | .27             | -.23            | -.18            |
| Standard<br>1.4              | .61                       | -               | .89**           | .24             | .59*            |
| Standard<br>2.4              | .27                       | .89**           | -               | .32             | .70*            |
| Standard<br>3.7              | -.23                      | .24             | .32             | -               | .59             |
| Standard<br>7.3              | -.18                      | .59*            | .70*            | .59             | -               |

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

Table 7

*Correlation between years worked and mean National Teacher Standard ratings*

|                                  | Number of<br>years worked | Mean rating<br>(all subscales) |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Number of years worked           | -                         | .12                            |
| Mean rating across all standards | .12                       | -                              |

# I. National Professional Standards - Derby District High School, 2011 Cohort Data & Results

## I.1 Descriptives

### I.1.1 Indigenous compared to Non-Indigenous

Question: Are you Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

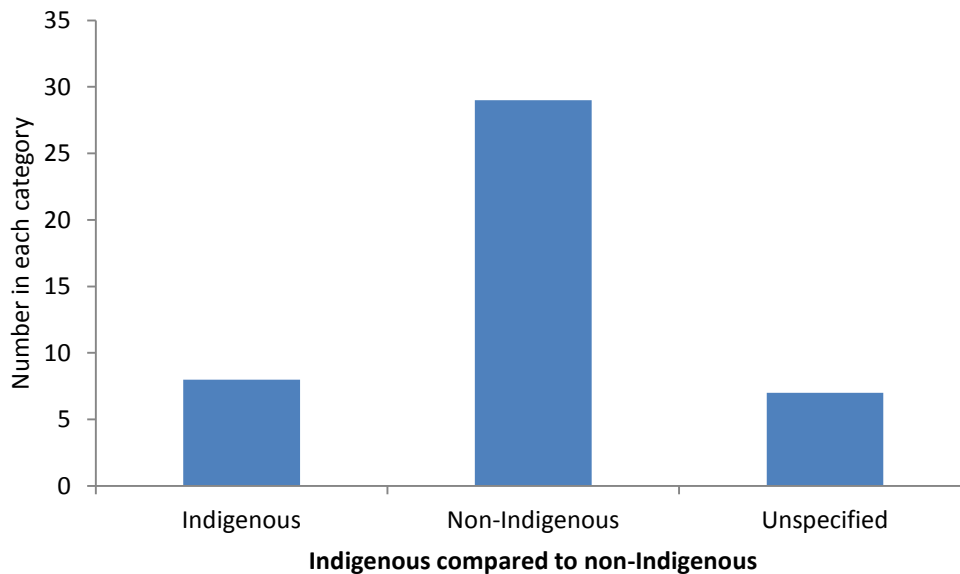


Figure 1: Teachers categorised by type: Indigenous, non-Indigenous and unknown

### I.1.2. SSLP vs. Non-SSLP Participants

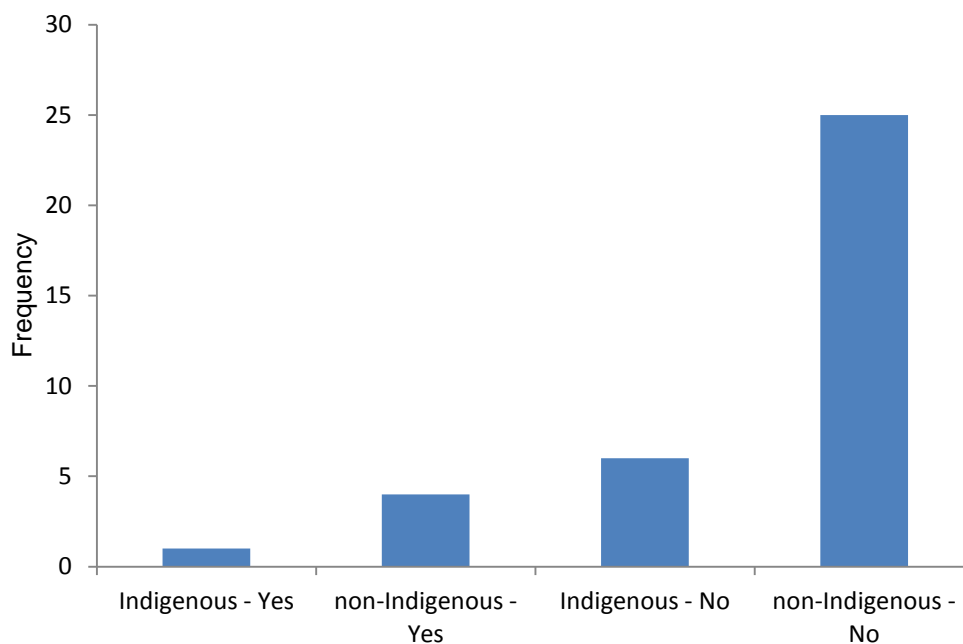


Figure 2: Teachers categorised by SSLP Attendance and Indigeneity

### I.1.3. Career Stage

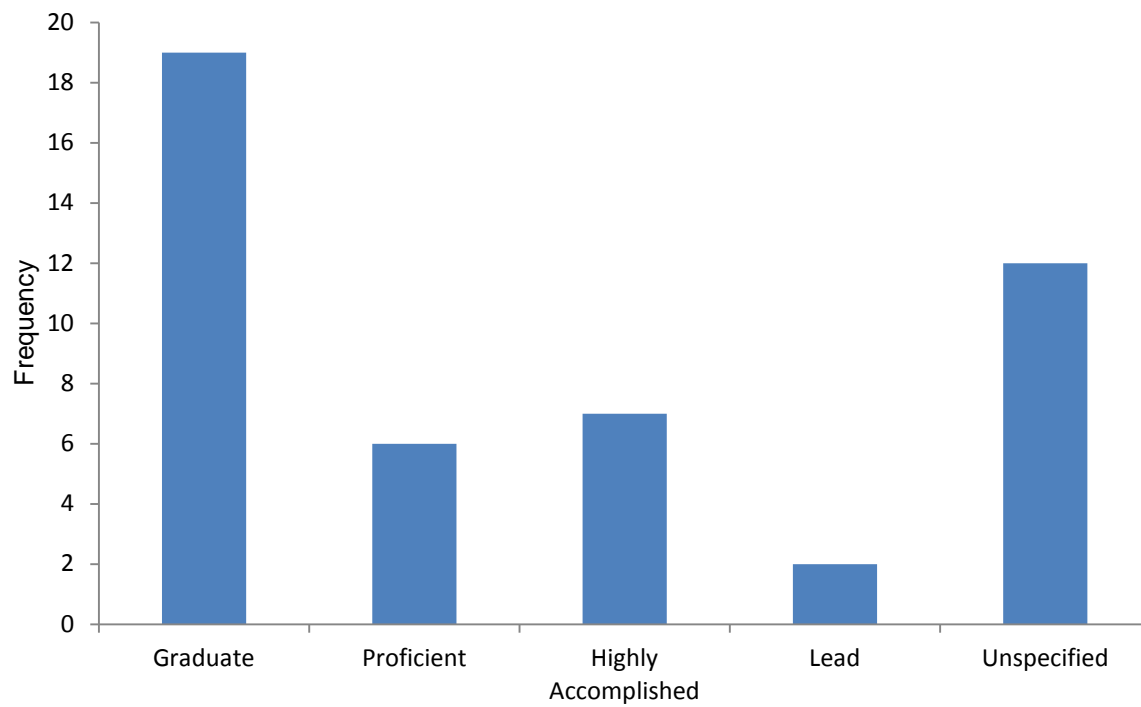


Figure 3: Teacher frequency by career stage

### I.1.4. Teaching experience

Question: Number of Years Worked

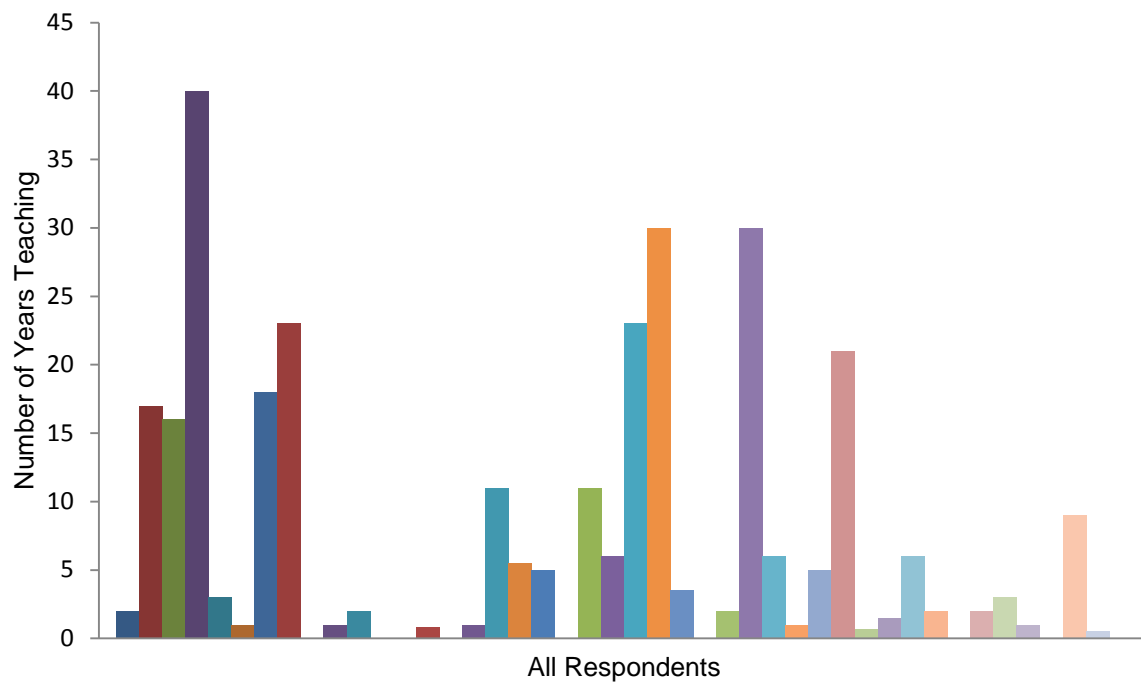


Figure 4: Teaching experience in years – all categories (Indigenous, non-Indigenous, unspecified)

| <u>Table 1.</u>   |       |
|---|-------|
| Number of Years Teaching - group descriptive statistics |       |
| Mean  | 8.62  |
| Standard Error  | 1.71  |
| Median  | 4.25  |
| Mode  | 2     |
| Standard Deviation                                      | 10.23 |
| Range   | 40    |
| Minimum   | 0     |
| Maximum   | 40    |
| Count   | 36    |

| <u>Table 2.</u>  |       |
|--|-------|
| Number of Years Teaching - Indigenous descriptive statistics |       |
| Mean   | 12.08 |
| Standard Error   | 6.1   |
| Median   | 7.25  |
| Mode   | 1     |
| Standard Deviation   | 14.94 |
| Range  | 39    |
| Minimum  | 1     |
| Maximum  | 40    |
| Count  | 6     |

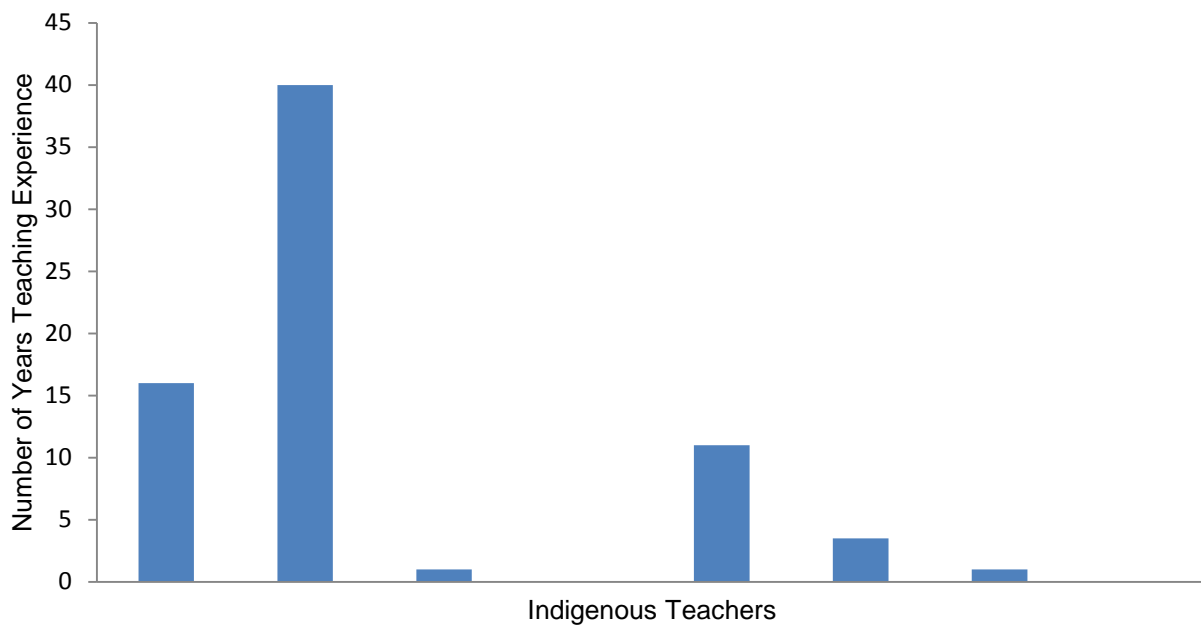


Figure 5: Teaching experience in years – Indigenous

In the context, Table 2 demonstrates a very large standard deviation. This generally indicates that there is a large amount of variation in the sample and that it is a small sample. In relation to this, we should keep in mind that two candidates did not enter their teaching experience and there is also one highly significant outlier (i.e. 40 yrs experience). These two things, particularly the outlier in conjunction with the small sample skew the result somewhat, particularly the mean and standard deviation. Accordingly, it is probably wiser to look at the median as a more accurate representation of the number of years teaching.

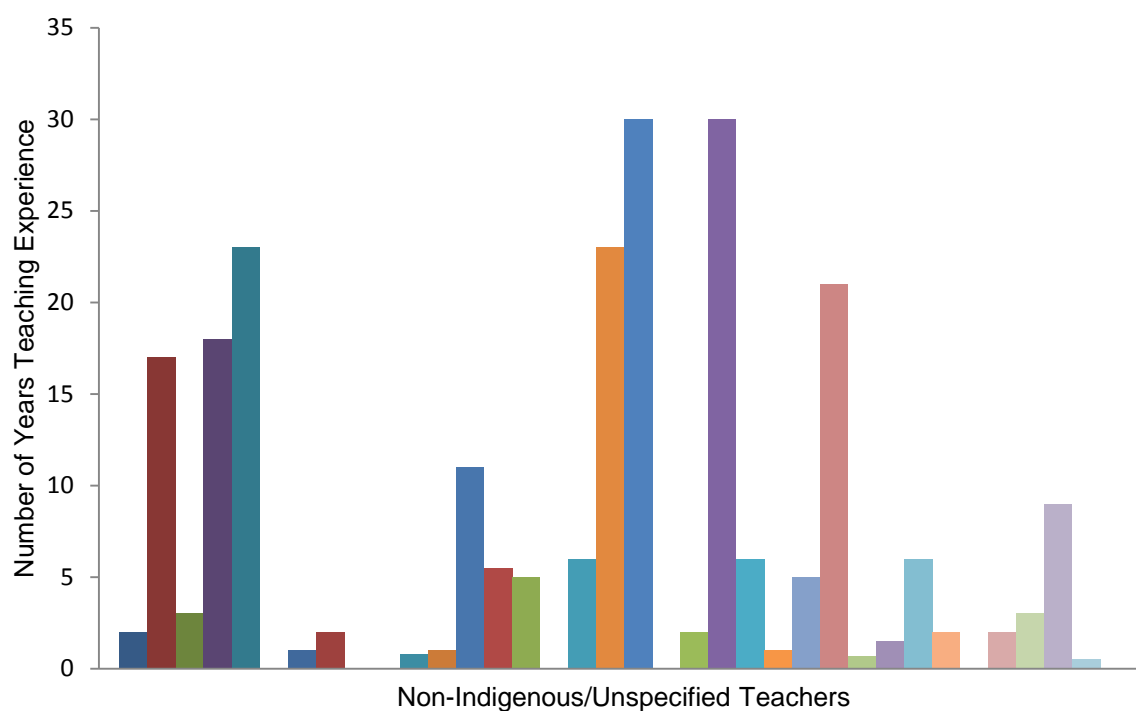


Figure 6: Teaching experience in years – non-Indigenous/unspecified

*Table 3.*

| <i>Number of Years Teaching - non-Indigenous &amp; unspecified</i> |      |
|--|------|
| Mean   | 7.93 |
| Standard Error   | 1.68 |
| Median   | 4    |
| Mode   | 2    |
| Standard Deviation   | 9.21 |
| Range  | 30   |
| Minimum  | 0    |
| Maximum  | 30   |
| Count  | 30   |



### I.1.5. Comparison of career stage (subjective response) vs. Years of experience

Figures 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 demonstrate participants subjective, self-rating of where they consider themselves to be on a continuum (consisting of the ratings “Graduate”, “Proficient”, “Highly Accomplished”, and “Lead”). However, the lack of clear criteria for each rating lends itself to ambiguity. While not necessarily attributable to this, a few questionable responses are observed, such as in Figure 7 (participant considers themselves a graduate after three years of teaching experience), Figure 8 (participant considers themselves only proficient after 20 years of teaching) and Figure 9 (participant considers themselves highly accomplished after 5 years of teaching experience).

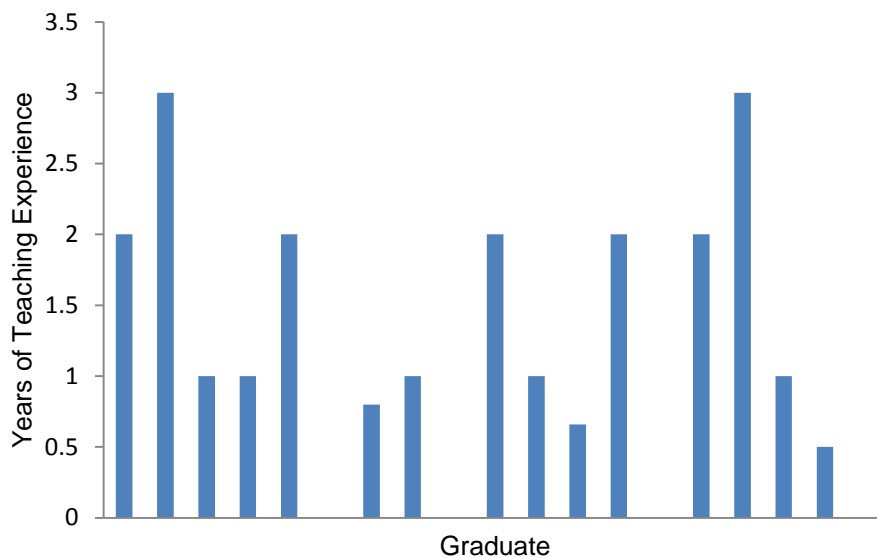


Figure 7: Teaching experience at Graduate level

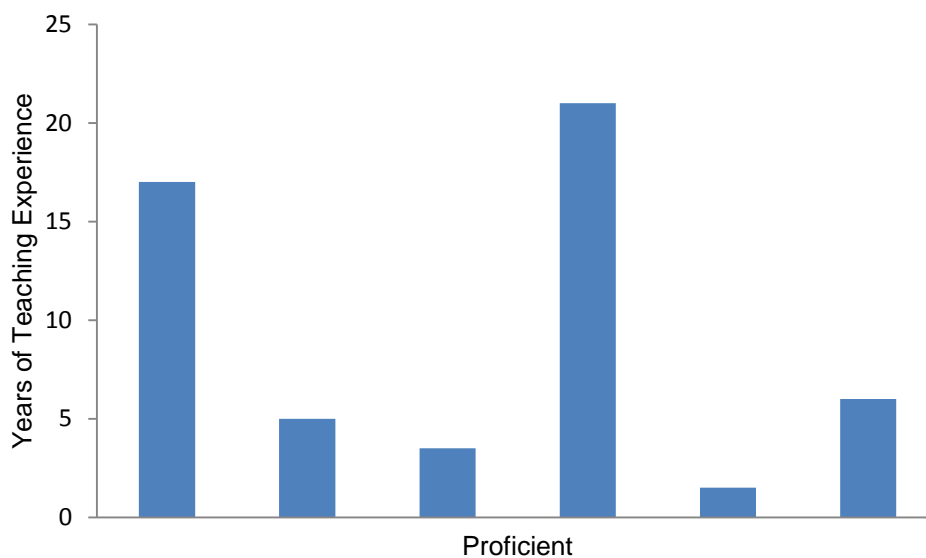


Figure 8: Teaching experience at Proficient level

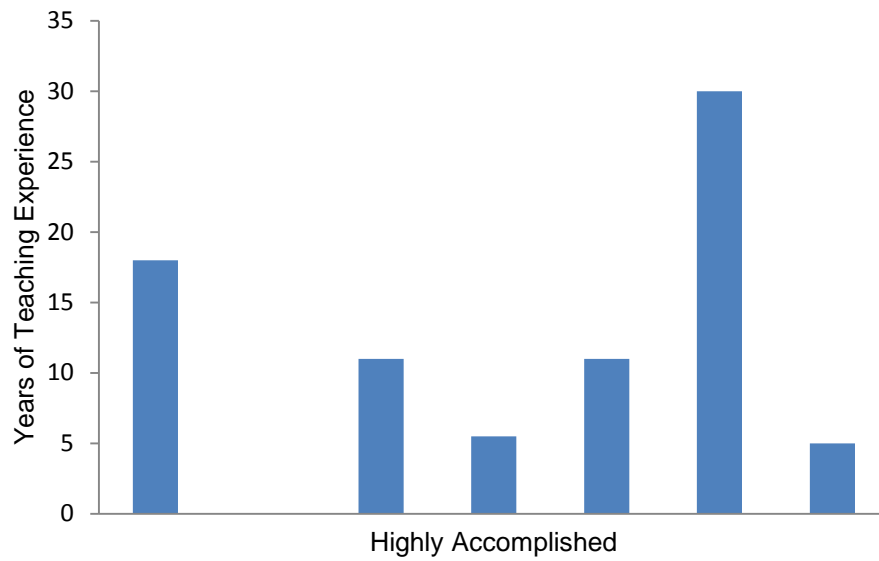


Figure 9: Teaching experience at Highly Accomplished level

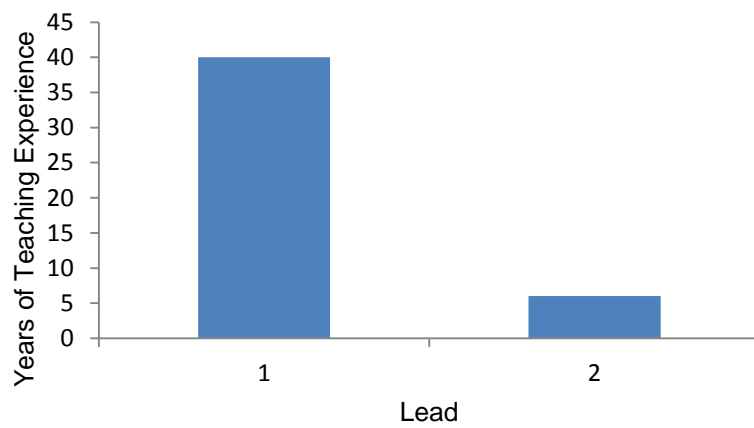


Figure 10: Teaching experience at Lead level

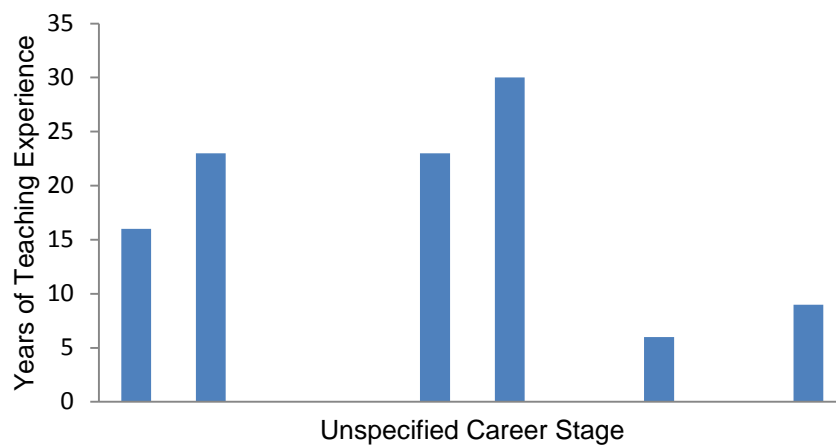


Figure 11: Teaching experience at unspecified level

### I.1.6. National Professional Teacher Standards – mean ratings

Below are the mean ratings for the overall, aggregated scale, each individual sub-scale and the number of years teaching experience. This has been done across categories (i.e. entire cohort, Indigenous teachers, and non-Indigenous teachers) so as to highlight any differences between demographic groups, as well as to indicate the extent to which each group's responses potentially impact the overall response.

*Table 4*

| <i>Subscale Descriptives - cohort</i> |      |                |    |
|---------------------------------------|------|----------------|----|
|                                       | Mean | Std. Deviation | N  |
| Number of years worked                | 8.62 | 10.23          | 36 |
| Standard 1.4                          | 2.48 | 0.76           | 44 |
| Standard 2.4                          | 2.58 | 0.79           | 43 |
| Standard 3.7                          | 2.32 | 0.77           | 41 |
| Standard 7.3                          | 2.75 | 0.77           | 42 |

*Table 5.*

| <i>Aggregated Subscale Descriptives - cohort</i> |      |                |    |
|--|------|----------------|----|
|  | Mean | Std. Deviation | N  |
| Number of years worked                           | 8.62 | 10.23          | 36 |
| Mean Rating across all Standards                 | 2.56 | 0.66           | 40 |

*Table 6.*

| <i>Subscale Descriptives - Indigenous</i> |       |                |   |
|---|-------|----------------|---|
|   | Mean  | Std. Deviation | N |
| Number of years worked                    | 12.08 | 14.93          | 6 |
| Standard 1.4                              | 3.00  | 0.80           | 8 |
| Standard 2.4                              | 3.50  | 0.58           | 7 |
| Standard 3.7                              | 2.75  | 0.82           | 6 |
| Standard 7.3                              | 3.07  | 0.84           | 7 |

*Table 7.*

| <i>Aggregated Subscale Descriptives - Indigenous</i> |       |                |   |
|--|-------|----------------|---|
|  | Mean  | Std. Deviation | N |
| Number of years worked                               | 12.08 | 14.93          | 6 |
| Mean Rating across all Standards                     | 3.21  | 0.65           | 6 |

*Table 8*  
*Subscale Descriptives- non-Indigenous*

|                        | Mean | Std. Deviation | N  |
|------------------------|------|----------------|----|
| Number of years worked | 6.36 | 7.24           | 28 |
| Standard 1.4           | 2.34 | 0.61           | 29 |
| Standard 2.4           | 2.41 | 0.60           | 29 |
| Standard 3.7           | 2.34 | 0.75           | 29 |
| Standard 7.3           | 2.64 | 0.80           | 28 |

*Table 9.*  
*Aggregated Subscale Descriptives - non-Indigenous*

|                                  | Mean | Std. Deviation | N  |
|----------------------------------|------|----------------|----|
| Number of years worked           | 6.36 | 7.24           | 28 |
| Mean Rating across all Standards | 2.45 | 0.56           | 28 |

## I.2 Correlation

### I.2.1 Correlation within overall group

Tables 10 and 11 indicate all significant and non-significant correlations between the number of years teaching experience and each sub-scale, and the number of years teaching experience and the aggregated mean of each sub-scale respectively. Only significant correlations have been graphed demonstrating the positive relationships between number of years teaching and each participants scale ratings, Figures 12, 13 and 14 depicting these relationships. Note that no correlations between the standards themselves have been graphed; although they do exist (see Table 10), these correlations are probably outside the scope and context of this particular analysis.

*Table 10.*  
*Correlations between number of years teaching experience and*  
*mean National Teacher Standard ratings by subscale – all groups*

|                               | Number of<br>years worked | Standard 1.4 | Standard 2.4 | Standard 3.7 | Standard 7.3 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Number of years<br>experience | -                         | 0.41*        | 0.33         | 0.22         | 0.37*        |
| Standard 1.4                  | 0.41*                     | -            | 0.80**       | 0.52**       | 0.63**       |
| Standard 2.4                  | 0.33                      | 0.80**       | -            | 0.52**       | 0.47**       |
| Standard 3.7                  | 0.22                      | 0.52**       | 0.52**       | -            | 0.64**       |
| Standard 7.3                  | 0.37*                     | 0.63**       | 0.47**       | 0.64**       | -            |

*Note.* \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

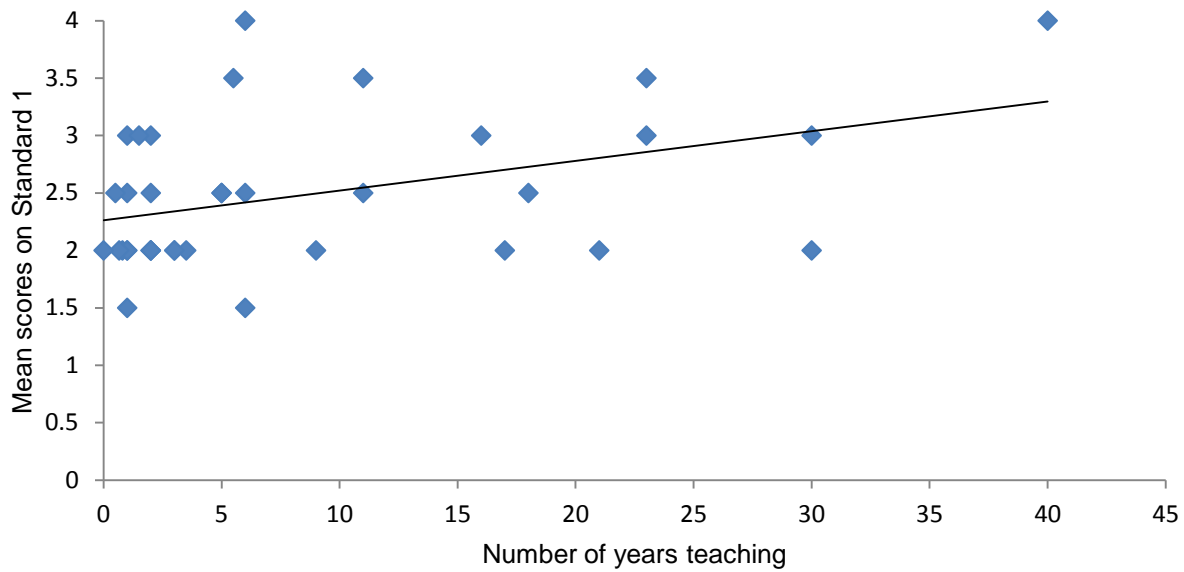


Figure 12: Correlation between number of years teaching and scores on National Professional Standard 1.4

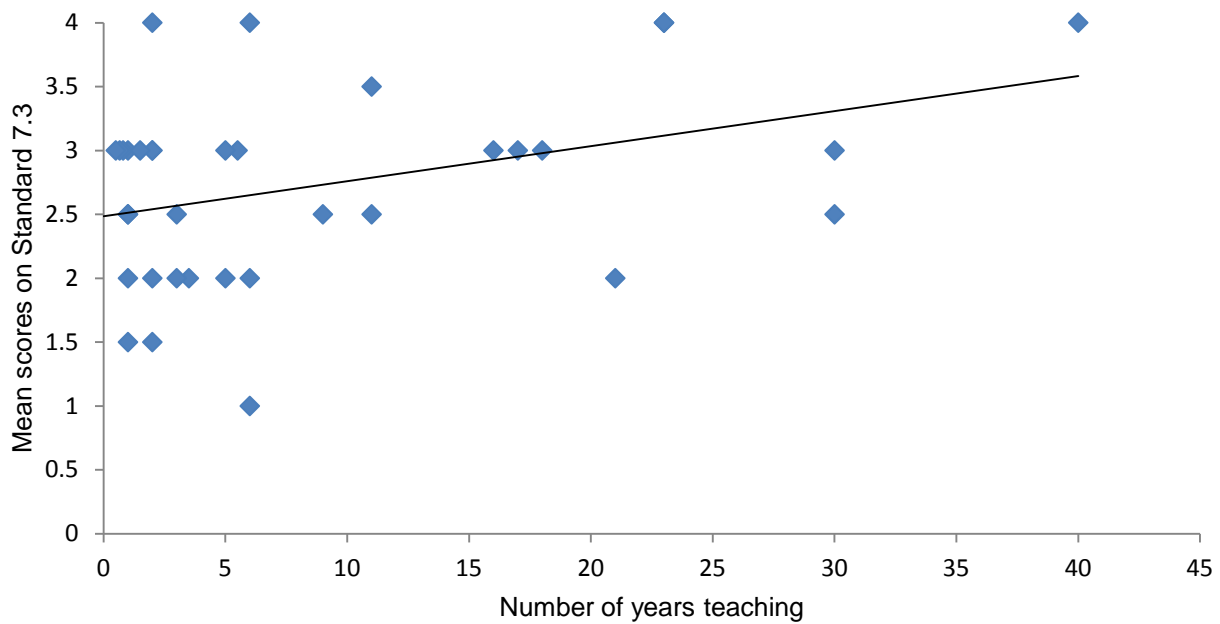


Figure 13: Correlation between number of years teaching and scores on National Professional Standard 7.3

Table 11.

Correlation between years worked and mean National Teacher Standard ratings

|                                  | Number of years worked | Mean rating (all subscales) |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Number of years worked           | -                      | 0.47**                      |
| Mean rating across all standards | 0.47**                 | -                           |

Note. \*\* $p < .01$

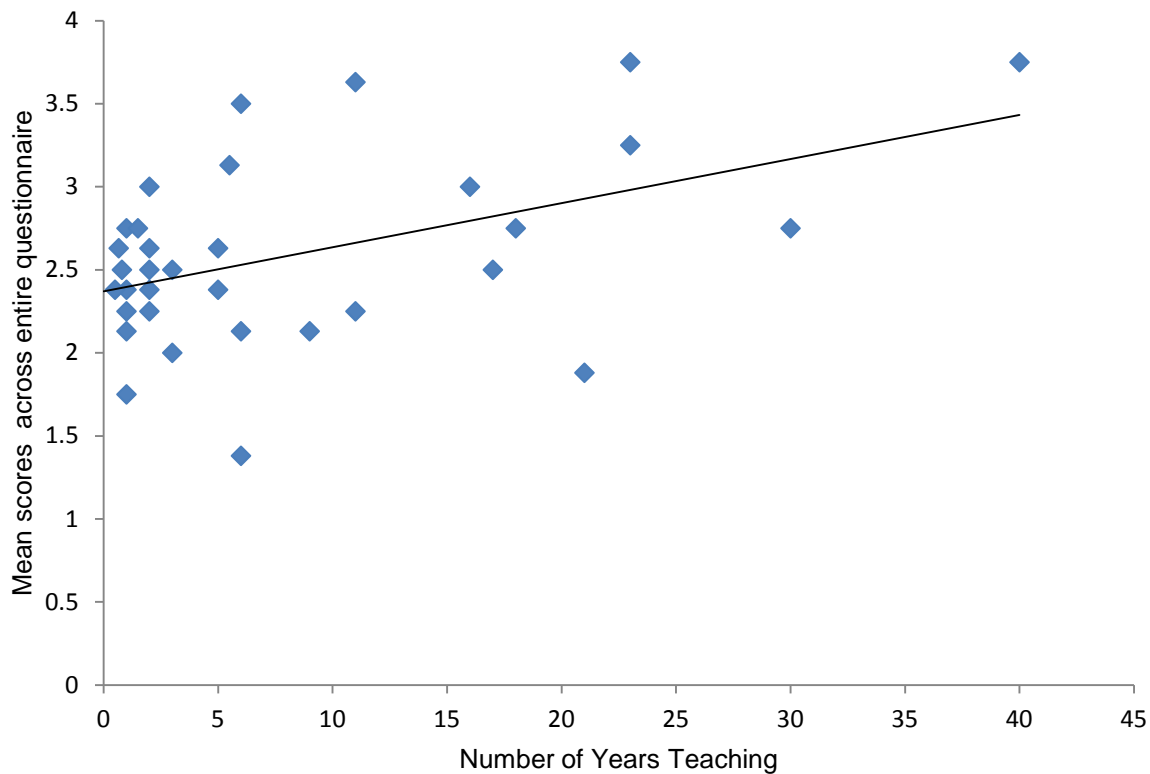


Figure 14: Correlation between number of years teaching and scores on aggregated mean of National Professional Standard's 1.4, 2.4, 3.7 and 7.3

### I.2.2 Correlation within Indigenous group

No correlations were found between years teaching and mean scale ratings (as scored by Indigenous teachers). Additionally, no correlation found between years teaching and any of the National Professional Standards subscales. However, it should be noted that correlations between Years Teaching and Standards 1.4 and 7.3 approached significance; given the sample size it's possible the group is too small to determine correlations should they actually exist.

### I.2.3 Correlation within non-Indigenous group

Similarly, no correlations were found between years teaching and mean scale ratings (as scored by non-Indigenous teachers). Additionally, no correlation found between years teaching and any of the National Professional Standards subscales. As such, only the overall group as a whole demonstrated significant correlations, presumably buoyed by the "approaching significance" weight of the Indigenous sub-group's significant correlations on Standard's 1.4 and 7.3. However, further investigation would need to be undertaken to clarify the factors that differentiate the two groups.

## J. Stronger Smarter Leadership Program – Regional Broome, WA

Participants from the 2011 Regional Stronger Smarter Leadership Program held in Broome WA. Group consist of Principals, Teachers, School leaders and Community Members.

### J.1. Workshop Data

#### J.1.1 Community Engagement

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##### What is Community Engagement?

- Establishing programs that are contextually relevant with the help of parents/carers and educators that will encourage and enable community to be involved in student learning.
- Parents/Caregivers as partners in education
- Parents/Caregivers as a resource in education
- Community recourses included in education (Human and Physical)

Community engagement From a teachers perspective looks like:

- Participation/Involvement
  - Meetings – council/decision making & student/teacher

Classroom Level:

- Involvement with their children – curriculum content

- The community to be involved within the school
- Parent meetings
- Decision making
- Working side by side with staff for students

Having ownership of their school (remote) having a partnership with the school (town).

Community engagement = participation/involvement of all aspects of community in the operation/decision making of their school. Ownership!!!

Community Engagement... meaningful involvement of parents and community members in planning, participating with schools to facilitate/strengthen educational activities.

- Participating in school activities
- Assisting in school events
- Leading cultural and historical learning in school
- Regular consultation between community members
- Partnerships
- Working alongside teachers
- Collaboratively involved in school planning

School and community working together to achieve active engagement and meaningful involvement in school decisions and activities. All stakeholders have a vital role and need to work together as one to facilitate and strengthen.

Community engagement is the involvement of parents/carers and organisations in the community in school decision making and activities.

Community and school working together... partnership!

Shared respect, ownership and partnership shown through honest open exchanges, conversations and actions between school and the wider community that enables and encourages community involvement in student learning.

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Active engagement and meaningful involvement in school decisions reflections and activities.

- All stakeholders have a vital role.
- School and community working together/ alongside each other.

Comes from admin/teachers being culturally competent understanding behaviours, practices, filters and the enable genuine relationships that build sustainable education of outcomes in response to student and community aspirations.

- Partnership centred around the students involving the community (school students, staff, parents, organisations etc)
- Expecting the same from non-Aboriginal parents and Aboriginal parents.
- Individual families not community first.

Mutually beneficial partnerships and the presence (the school within the community and the community within the school)

All aspects of community members and agencies whether they are parents or not being involved in school process re:

- Meetings which could be:
  1. SCPA Process Meetings – community surveys
  2. A specific community concern
  3. Cultural campo planning as organisers or helpers
- Open communications between parents and teachers of their child's progress and having input into engaging in classroom activities.

Community engagement is involvement and participation in the community's school environment and activities, either as organisers or helpers. They belong to the school as much as their community.

Decision making

- NADIOC Week
- Camps
- P&C
- Cultural Activities
- Classrooms
- Meetings



## K. QUT First Year Education Students - Caboolture Campus

### K.1 Workshop Process

#### K.1.1 Community Engagement

| What is Community Engagement?   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Having an understanding of the surrounding community then using this knowledge to contribute to the community.</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community engagement to me means to be an active citizen in my surroundings be involved in things such as clean up day etc</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being an active member of the community, going out, organising events being part of “it”</li><li>• Getting to know and making an effort to be active with the community.</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Having awareness and understanding of the issues within your community and being actively involved in these as well as ensuring all are included.</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Involving everybody, learning about each other, accepting everybody’s differences and uniqueness, cohesion and collaboration.</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being active in your community</li><li>• Being involved in various aspects through your community</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Volunteer time in your community</li><li>• Actively participating in matters of the community in order to impact positively on the people, land and other living things within the community for a more sustainable future.</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking part of and embracing the community surrounding you</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowing members of your community and all working together for the benefit of the community. Your community can include schools, business, groups and people.</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is becoming involved, and informed about, the community in which you are teaching in through active participation</li><li>• Being active in the community and people you live in.</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participation in a variety of communities you’re involved with.</li><li>• Listening to community and people in the community</li><li>• Builds relationships and partnerships</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being involved in the school community, being involved in the local community and being a participant instead of an observer.</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acknowledge people of the community and the knowledge they bring, incorporate and utilise the learning’s and people.</li><li>• Advocate for rights and equity of all in the community</li><li>• Being an active part of your community</li><li>• When the community actively participates in an event or activity</li><li>• Getting the wider community involved in whatever activity/program/project/event concerned</li></ul> |

## L. Images

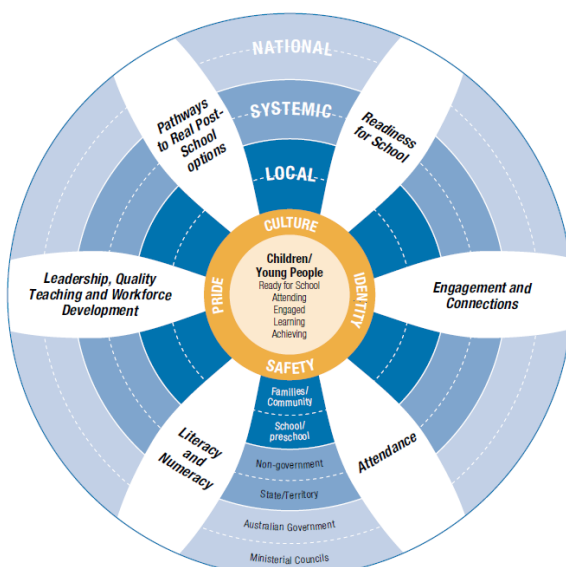
### L.1 Stronger Smarter Leadership Program Posters



### L.2 Map of sites where data was collected



### L.3 Conceptual overview from MCEECDYA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010 – 2014



#### L.4 Student Drawings from Workshops – Casino SSLC Schools, NSW



## L5 Student Drawings from Workshops – Tullawong State High School, QLD



## L.6 Wordle from Workshop – Fitzroy Valley District High School



## L.7 AITSL National Professional Standard for Teachers, 2011

From Page 13

| Standard 3 – Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Focus area  | Graduate  | Proficient   | Highly Accomplished   | Lead  |
| <b>3.7 Engage parents/carers in the educative process</b>           | Describe a broad range of strategies for involving parents/carers in the educative process. | Plan for appropriate and contextually relevant opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in their children's learning. | Work with colleagues to provide appropriate and contextually relevant opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in their children's learning. | Initiate contextually relevant processes to establish programs that involve parents/carers in the education of their children and broader school priorities and activities. |

From Page 19

| Standard 7 – Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community |  |   |  |   |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Focus area   | Graduate   | Proficient  | Highly Accomplished  | Lead  |
| <b>7.3 Engage with the parents/carers</b>  | Understand strategies for working effectively, sensitively and confidentially with parents/carers. | Establish and maintain respectful collaborative relationships with parents/carers regarding their children's learning and well-being. | Demonstrate responsiveness in all communications with parents/carers about their children's learning and well-being. | Identify, initiate and build on opportunities that engage parents/carers in both the progress of their children's learning and in the educational priorities of the school. |