

5. MAGENTA SECONDARY SCHOOL

CONTEXT

Magenta Secondary school is located on the northern shore of Sydney with predominantly Anglo-European neighbourhoods in comparison to other Sydney regions (ABS 2006). A small, but significant, number of Aboriginal students are enrolled at the school. Some students are drawn from the local area with others coming from rural and regional New South Wales. Aboriginal students attend the school for various periods of time, ranging from less than a term to several years.

While attending the school the majority of Aboriginal students lived in a nearby hostel with Aboriginal 'house parents' who oversee the operations of the hostel, maintain contact with the high school and its activities and communicate with the students' parents or carers in their home community. A smaller percentage of Aboriginal students at the school are from families that are well established locally. Throughout the project the school maintained their established connections with the hostel staff and several local Aboriginal community members including some who worked in other educational institutions such as the Technical and Further Education College (TAFE). The TAFE's Aboriginal Learning Centre provided a space for the local Aboriginal community to gather, hold meetings and events. The Aboriginal Learning Centre houses a permanent Aboriginal cultural objects collection and host exhibitions of artworks. The Aboriginal students were frequently involved in teaching/learning activities at the Aboriginal Learning Centre.

IMPLEMENTATION

The action learning team at Magenta School initially comprised several non-Aboriginal teachers (one of whom was responsible for the management of the project), one librarian, an Aboriginal Education Officer and an Aboriginal community partner endorsed by the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group. The deputy principal was also very supportive and involved in the earliest unfolding of the action learning project. Over time, for a range of reasons, this membership experienced change as did school management.

Magenta Secondary School initially commenced the action learning project activities collaboratively with two nearby primary schools with a shared academic mentor. The three schools had in common the fact that the majority of Aboriginal students resided for short or longer periods in hostels or alternate accommodation away from their communities of origin.

In the initial phase of the project, the Aboriginal academic partner/mentor, whose expertise was in the area of Aboriginal English and literacy, worked with all

three schools. The three schools developed teaching and learning activities with the overarching title of *Narrative Identity and Place*. By the end of the first year, the project strands across the three schools became increasingly differentiated and the projects evolved separately in each of the schools. Mid way through the project, the role of academic and student mentor at Magenta school was given to a local Aboriginal educator and community member with extensive teaching experience. This provided teachers with the added advantage of having easy access to a person with sound knowledge of the local area.

Phase 1

The first phase of the project involved cross-school collaboration with a number of the Magenta Secondary School Aboriginal students undertaking work experience placements at one partner primary school to enhance their leadership, self-esteem and qualification enabling further education pathways in early childhood education. Representatives of a local Aboriginal education organisation observed the progress of those students noting that they became 'so much more confident'. Creative arts initiatives were instigated in the initial phase with those Magenta School students residing at the hostel. These included student 'rap' performance and art-making. This aspect culminated in an exhibition of student works for their school and broader community.

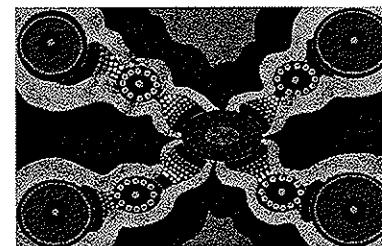


Figure 5. Example of a Magenta Secondary School student's artwork depicting her strength, in her journey from community to community.

Phase 2

As noted above, during the second phase of the project, the two primary schools and the secondary school separated their project activities into three independent projects. One suggested reason for this was the incompatible demands of primary and secondary school organisational requirements, such as staff release patterns

and curriculum structures. The differing approaches within the broader project were also considered to be a contributing factor.

While all project teams were provided with project directions and resources, Magenta School identified some initial difficulties in establishing the direction of the project and what was required under the NSW Board of Studies syllabus requirements. One participant said “it did need a stronger framework to begin with – because it was a little bit like self-discovery learning – and we went off into directions that the project officers didn’t perceive as important”. After the team’s initial uncertainty, the Department’s project manager provided prompt, on-site support and the project team gained confidence to take a new direction.

In the first two phases of the project, the focus had been to apply the principles of action learning and Quality Teaching with two key questions in mind:

- What do teachers need to know to improve Aboriginal students’ educational outcomes?
- How might the inclusion of cultural knowledge improve Aboriginal students’ educational outcomes?

Phase 3

In phase three of the project the school focused on the second question, though the two can be seen to be interrelated. The focus shifted to developing the students’ self-identity through research into family histories and personal narratives using Information and Communication Technologies. Students’ personal stories became e-narratives incorporating *In Design*, *Photoshop*, *Marvin* and other programs to build interactive stories of their Country and family. Students’ cultural heritage and knowledge were captured in their portfolios, reflected in their personal learning plans and engendered dialogue with family and community members at home. In terms of students’ extra curricula activity, a small group of Aboriginal students were initially involved in the production of a school magazine. One student sustained that involvement. Her experience is reported to have been very positive and she is able to now mentor others.

The employment of a local Aboriginal community member as a casual teacher at the school impacted favorably on the development of the project. She fulfilled important roles as ‘Aunty’ and teacher to the cohort of female Aboriginal secondary students at the school. Her education qualifications and Aboriginal cultural knowledge were welcomed, as was her professional contribution to the project team and other teachers at the high school. She was able to engage students in identifying a range of relevant teaching and learning activities that integrated Aboriginal cultural knowledge. These activities were developmentally appropriate and gender sensitive, incorporating syllabus requirements. A number of her own ex-university students, some of whom are successful in a range of fields including Indigenous literary arts and law, provided positive mentoring and motivation to the school’s Aboriginal students.

The Aboriginal teacher and community member assumed the role of academic partner to the project team. In this new capacity many positive changes occurred through increased opportunities to work with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and teachers to raise awareness of Aboriginal cultures and histories in the school.

With an experienced Aboriginal teacher and librarian on staff, the action learning team was able to concentrate on embedding Aboriginal perspectives into Key Learning Areas such as Technology and Applied Studies and Human Society and Its Environment in the junior secondary curriculum. A Year 8 Technology Unit was based on the contemporary batik works produced by women from the *Ernabella* community where the Technology and Applied Studies teacher had previously worked. The unit, which included an interactive white board presentation linked with worksheets for students to complete, was designed so that all teachers could use it. This approach was used across the school. It was described as being based on the need to “build in” tasks so that all teachers could feel comfortable in using them even if they had limited knowledge of Aboriginal cultures. Units of work foregrounding Aboriginal cultural knowledge were introduced into Science (Year 8), Geography (Year 9), English (Years 7 and 8), Creative Arts (Year 8) and Languages (Year 8). By the close of the project, the take-up rate of subject areas incorporating Aboriginal perspectives had expanded and teachers across Key Learning Areas were approaching the Aboriginal teacher to collaborate on curriculum change.

IMPACT

The implementation of the project at Magenta enhanced teacher professional learning in a number of ways and contributed to a more school based focus on Aboriginal cultural knowledge.

Participation in Professional Development

A survey of teachers (see Appendix) indicated that staff participation in professional development on Aboriginal education grew from 60% to 75% over a twelve-month period. There was an increase in the extent to which staff engagement with the Aboriginal community was impacting on their teaching. Among staff who felt it had made a ‘substantial’ impact, the proportion increased from 6% to 15%.

As a result of these activities, there was an increase in staff who had adjusted their teaching strategies for their Aboriginal students and included Aboriginal cultural knowledge into their teaching and were more inclined to access the resources of the local Aboriginal community. Those doing so ‘occasionally’ rose from 35% to 56%. The proportion that said their teaching practices were ‘substantially’ inclusive of Aboriginal cultural knowledge rose from 11% to 17%. The resources accessed from the local Aboriginal community also increased from 30% to 44% in the 12 months period.

Teacher Insights

Bearing in mind the different levels of experience and confidence in working with Aboriginal communities, the project did develop the teachers' understanding of the Quality Teaching model. It appeared that embedding Aboriginal cultural knowledge within specific Key Learning Areas through the Quality Teaching elements had reassured teachers that Aboriginal cultural knowledge could form part of the mainstream curriculum. The project team leader explained how:

including Aboriginal cultural knowledge fulfils many of the dimensions of Quality Teaching – and this fact is very reassuring to teachers who are hesitant about focusing on Aboriginal cultural knowledge and understanding its place in the mainstream curricula.

Another example of one teacher's experience of change in practice is described below:

Amongst the many mistakes I've made is I used to write a letter to the girls' parents. ...It didn't occur to me that they would open the letter with the letterhead and an envelope and immediately assume that it was bad news so they didn't read it. So, we've been frantically getting letters of commendation home and two grandmas have rung, well they've rung the hostel manager, to say that they are so happy to see these non-threatening [comments].

The opportunities created by the regular presence of an Aboriginal teacher, unattached to a specific Key Learning Area, supported a range of positive outcomes. While the development of Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum at this school site had been an aspiration of the project team manager for several years, and had been promoted as desirable to whole school audiences over time, only a few teachers prior to the project had developed these understandings.

The teachers who included Aboriginal perspectives in their Key Learning Areas noted that their focus on contemporary issues – even simple things like the need to acknowledge Country – helped all students to become more confident with Aboriginal cultures. The principal encouraged the Student Representative Council to fly the Aboriginal flag, was approachable and took an active interest in Aboriginal students and engaged them in discussions about their projects or Aboriginal issues.

The Technological and Applied Studies teacher's capacity to use interactive whiteboard technology really brought the material to life. Again the teacher noted the role of the academic partner in the success of the Technological and Applied Studies program "...my personal knowledge was enhanced... [she] willingly shared resources and knowledge to enrich the delivery of units to all students".

The Aboriginal teacher's appointment as academic partner, enabled her to act almost as an internal consultant to non-Aboriginal teaching staff. Her expertise and communication skills were welcomed by several teachers, representing a range of

discipline areas, and assisted them in their incorporation of Aboriginal cultural knowledge in their teaching and learning activities. The academic partner's agency enabled a degree of authenticity of Aboriginal representation to infuse the various streams within the project.

The inclusion of units of work in Key Learning Areas resulted in an increase in the quality of curriculum resources in Technological and Applied Studies, English and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. The English teachers worked on using the *Kanyini* project resources with Stage 6 students, as well as working on poetry, fiction and non-fiction with other student groups. The Personal Development, Health and Physical Education teacher looked at various Aboriginal health issues.

Another positive outcome of the project was the updating of teaching resources in Aboriginal Studies and increased access through the library. An audit of the resources ensured that they were culturally appropriate. The academic partner was an integral part of this process and, according to the librarian, assisted in establishing a "really meaningful and relevant Aboriginal collection. Working with the academic [partner] has been 'invaluable in that she has shared her expertise of Aboriginal [resources]...she has evaluated our collection from a unique perspective as an Aboriginal woman, academic and librarian".

Greater Level of Student Engagement

Teachers noted a higher level of student engagement as they felt more confident and motivated to learn about Aboriginal culture. They also felt that it provided students with a greater focus on contemporary Aboriginal cultures. Teachers were now including cultural knowledge into assessment.

There was a great display of Aboriginal students' confidence because their culture was being highlighted. This was reinforced by the Aboriginal officer at the hostel who had the role of supporting the students while they were at the school. She noted that there was clear evidence of improved engagement and the "girls seem to be enthusiastic about their work at school – they don't complain about staying at school." Her view was that "... we really have produced a good year – hardworking year – but I feel that everybody has achieved something positive".

Teachers also noted increased interaction across the student population with the Aboriginal students:

...there is more interest and a whole lot more talking about it – and more interest in the background [of the] girls – people know that it is going on.

In addition to the above, one non-Aboriginal teacher interviewed noted the work done by two Aboriginal students on the school journal raised awareness of the contribution Aboriginal students were making to the school. It also helped the Aboriginal students to expand their activities beyond their 'Aboriginal group' from the hostel.

What was Learned in Working with Aboriginal Communities and Students about Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge

The project activities generated a number of incremental changes. Changes were noted in students' approach to school and in their level of exposure to and awareness of future vocational opportunities. For the Aboriginal students, their sense of cultural and social affirmation was evident as a result of their non-Aboriginal peers' learning about Aboriginal cultural knowledge and having Aboriginal cultural content integrated as part of their everyday classroom experience. While the students always had access to the high quality cultural and learning support from the Aboriginal Education Officers at the school, having an Aboriginal teacher as an academic partner was a new dimension in the project.

Key Factors in Supporting Aboriginal Students and Aboriginal Programs in Schools

A supportive principal and effective executive leadership in the school were considered to be very important factors in the success of the program. The action learning team at Magenta school received strong and continued support from the principal, seeing it as a key policy reform for the school. The project team leader showed great commitment to the project, used her team management skills effectively and was responsive to the team's needs by involving an Aboriginal teacher/ librarian in the project. She also demonstrated leadership and negotiation skills in supporting that teacher's transition into the role of academic partner.

Project funding provided support for the time needed to address the challenges along with the professional learning needed in adapting "established" curricula in changing work patterns. The project developed a greater sense of professionalism and a growing capacity to reflect on pedagogical practices. Teachers reported that they valued the extra time they were able to devote to reflection on their pedagogical practices.

There was evidence of enhanced engagement in discussions about Aboriginal cultural knowledge by project members, as well as a willingness to learn and talk about the relevance of Aboriginal cultural knowledge in their teaching. Issues of protocols and "ownership" of knowledge presented real challenges that the project team assessed would take time for school staff to address and try to reconcile. Another feature of the project was the increased communication between the school and the students' home communities. The project leader commented in November 2008 "we had some grandmas ring up and say 'we have never had the girls so settled'".

Consultation and Collaboration with Aboriginal Community

As noted earlier, schools are busy places, and the capacities and opportunities for the action learning team to engage and partner with the local Aboriginal community appeared to be shaped by pre-established views about who made up the local Aboriginal community, how they perceived the community, and the

processes they put in place to link and support involvement with the community. At this school some complexities arose from the fact that most of the Aboriginal students' home communities were outside of the school's local area. For the team members, redefining "the local Aboriginal community" was significant in regard to both the direction and the extent to which the school consulted with their resident local Aboriginal community.

Early in the project, a teacher identified the "local Aboriginal community" as "the students themselves" and "what the students bring with them". Another identified the hostel house parent as a significant local community representative in her capacity as a substitute parent/carer and legal guardian for the students while at school. The school regarded the substitute parent/carer as the key community member for the purposes of consultation and liaison in the project. To some extent this led to lesser involvement in the project of the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group members and at times impacted on a truly collaborative approach to the project.

However, the school understood the need to connect with the students' home communities as did the Department and other local Aboriginal community members. This enabled teachers to support student research about their own local Countries as settings for their school assignments. An example of this related to the students' work on digital narratives that linked their home communities and their experiences in their new urban environment. This enabled links to emerge between home communities and the local area.

One team member raised the practical challenges of meetings between school staff and local Aboriginal community organisation members. Staff from the school worked during school hours, while many community representatives attended their monthly meetings in the evenings. During the project phases, representatives from the local Aboriginal education group did, when invited, visit the school. But these visits were largely for presentations and not for project or other school planning.

The team members also contributed to the achievement of many goals by collaborating with the Aboriginal academic partner, who was a local Aboriginal community member. They enlisted the assistance of the appropriate regional Departmental Aboriginal Education Consultant to respond to the professional enquiries of the team and the school staff generally. The team members also reported more positive feedback from some Aboriginal parents, as a result of the project.

Several members of the local community, including from the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group were critical of the lack of active consultation on the part of the school during the life of the project. One representative explained later that this rendered "the local Aboriginal community" a "wasted resource". It only contributed to, as one participant described, the inaccurate perception of the "profile of this [Aboriginal] community" as being "invisible".

Representations from a local Aboriginal community organisation indicated that the communication by the school action learning team members about planning and progress of the project was inadequate over the life of the project. Some Aboriginal community participants identified the need for regular project team meetings to be arranged with greater notice. Similarly, the development of a project advisory group with community members would have provided more

opportunities for the academic partner, team members and community representatives to collaborate in the project planning.

Understandings of Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge

The team members reported that they had enhanced their understandings of Aboriginal cultural knowledge. However, at this school site there were complexities that arose from the unique residential nature of Aboriginal students' school attendance. These complexities related to the nature of the consultations and questions of whose cultural knowledge was accessed to inform the school's perspectives on Aboriginal cultural knowledge which were being constructed through the work of teachers in the school.

While the various 'home' cultures of the students were acknowledged, and efforts made to access that knowledge, the team found it difficult to access them at a distance. Most found that communicating with regional communities was time consuming and replies were not always received in good time.

Something of the nature of teachers' learning about Aboriginal cultural knowledge was encapsulated in one teachers' statement that "we didn't know we could put in a [Google] search for Barkindji [the regional Aboriginal language group] and have lots of hits...we are learning". Also the action learning team leader explained that she now felt much more confident as her own teaching had improved as a result of the project. She stated:

My personal knowledge now influences my ability to communicate my knowledge, my experience, my respect for traditional cultural knowledge to other colleagues. I now consider that I am able to communicate with non-Aboriginal students in a more creative and sensitive way - and am able to act as their bridge between the dominant non-Aboriginal curriculum and Aboriginal cultural knowledge. ... I have become more confident, and in fact, assertive in the inclusion of Aboriginal cultural knowledge resources in the classroom.

As suggested earlier, mid-way through the project, a member of the local Aboriginal community assumed the role of academic partner and as a result the project activity launched into a more strategic, cohesive phase. Concurrently, a resource audit took place culminating in the development of a dedicated library location for books on Aboriginal cultural knowledge. This complemented the gradual 'take up' of opportunities for enhanced support for integrating Aboriginal perspectives offered by the Aboriginal cultural mentor. Teachers on the whole, said they felt more confident in introducing Aboriginal perspectives in their units of work within their Key Learning Areas. According to the academic partner "changes have occurred in the ethos of the staff... [there has been] a growing comprehension of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content and Quality Teaching".

Barriers, Challenges and Opportunities

Time constraints are acknowledged as a universal challenge when new and innovative programs are introduced - this project was no exception.

Implementing the project was perceived as increasing teachers' workload, but in the end this was not seen as a deterrent to undertaking the project. As one member of the executive commented "I don't know if any of us would have been involved ... well I probably would have I guess... had we realised the amount of work ... it's seen as an enormous amount of work". The willingness of staff to be involved was supported by adequate resources for staff relief and meetings. It was acknowledged that without the funding the project could not be sustained indefinitely.

The challenge for teachers to connect the project to syllabus outcomes was identified as a challenge. The Aboriginal academic partner played a key role in guiding teachers to find ways of addressing this challenge. For example, there was a need for resources of sufficient academic rigour for various senior high school syllabus documents, and the academic partner was able to help with some subject areas, such as Dance. The academic partner was able to locate a former National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association dancer who provided appropriate cultural support and guidance to the teachers.

Another challenge was to source educational publications that contained locally generated, Aboriginal community endorsed contents on Aboriginal cultural knowledge. The Aboriginal academic partner also noted that sample units of work foregrounding Aboriginal cultural knowledge were not yet available to teachers from the Board of Studies New South Wales website, along with other syllabus support material. At this site and among many other sites the limited availability of these kinds of resources provided challenges for project teams. The need to develop locally based Aboriginal teaching and learning resources represents a key challenge for future efforts to support teachers accessing and drawing on local Aboriginal cultural knowledge.

The connections the school could make with the parents and the home communities of their Aboriginal students were very important to the ongoing efforts to improve student learning. The ability to connect effectively with the Aboriginal students' home communities was an ongoing challenge, even though the project did make a positive start in helping the development of more effective contacts. A further challenge was how to sustain the program once the students who were part of this project returned to their home communities.

The challenges relating to interpretations of who constituted the local Aboriginal community have been noted and perhaps require further discussion and debate. Negotiating appropriate collaboration and consultation between the school and the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group is an ongoing challenge for the school. An increased focus on local Aboriginal knowledge will provide future students with the capacity to connect with Aboriginal communities and to learn about the local cultural heritage, which in turn will enrich broader perspectives on Aboriginal history and culture.

The team leader noted the need for further professional development for teachers across Key Learning Areas to ensure that Aboriginal cultural knowledge becomes part of the curriculum:

There is still resistance to include Aboriginal cultural knowledge in some areas, but I think that will be overcome when we do the cultural workshops through the new Aboriginal Education Policy.

For the school and its future development within the local community, it was important to continue to develop and maintain connections with active members of the local Aboriginal community. This could ensure maintenance of current programs and develop opportunities for expanding understanding of local Aboriginal knowledge.

Leadership

The support of the principal to the goals of the project, even though she was not directly involved in the day to day running of the project was critical. In the initial phase the deputy-principal led the team, at the mid point of the project, the role was transferred to the head teacher (Administration). The project team leader successfully negotiated the appointment of the Aboriginal academic partner. In doing so she demonstrated her capacity to synthesize the multiple and concurrent demands on the team, and to make the necessary structural changes, based upon her own evaluation of the project's direction.

Role of Mentors and Other Community Based Groups

The project had two different academic mentors. The first Aboriginal academic mentor was affiliated with a regional university some distance from the school. Her research expertise in Aboriginal English and Aboriginal literacy supported various aspects of the initial project collaboration among the three original schools involved. The project team leader noted the academic partner's "wonderful idea" to have the students also "work with their communities". The development of the students' Personal Learning Programs digital narratives indicated the success of this suggestion, which generated quality outcomes for both students and staff. This initiative led to transformative learning for teachers as they engaged in researching Aboriginal cultural knowledge from different regional communities.

With respect to the second academic mentor one teacher noted "the project has given us the opportunity to work with the local community and work with an academic partner who has been able to guide us and make suggestions ... her contribution has been invaluable and has given us the confidence to find our own resources". Her vast teaching experience in a range of settings and librarianship skills brought necessary expertise to the next stage of the project. The teacher also noted, additionally, the advantages of having an academic partner who resided close to the school. This helped with networking and with a more informed awareness of the local community. Her experience as a teacher meant that she also recognised teachers' busy schedules. Across the 21 schools in the overall project there were few Aboriginal teachers employed at these schools. At this site, having an Aboriginal teacher involved, who was able to make many key contributions,

was highly valued. She stated that "we, Aboriginal people, coming in on a project, are your equals and we wish to work with equal, mutual respect".

Another agent and stakeholder was the Departmental Project Manager who made visits to the school for the purpose of clarifying the intentions of the project. The school team leader reported that Magenta School found the unprecedented nature of the project somewhat difficult to adjust to initially, and it took time before the project developed the momentum achieved in the final phase. The role of the Departmental Project Manager was regarded as very important and she was instrumental in progressing the project beyond its early phases, providing the guidance to continue it to completion. As one participant noted "we would be where we were 5 years ago if not for the project – a huge part of that is the personal commitment for the project team members from DET".

Sustaining the Project

One of the main problems with government funded initiatives is that invariably when external funding ends, the project is scaled down. Suggestions for continued support involve collaborative partnerships with a regional Aboriginal Education consultant to organise staff development days, to expand the range of resource sites for teachers to access, and to assist individual teachers to place Aboriginal cultural knowledge perspectives into their units of work.

A continuing emphasis on the importance of contemporary cultural knowledge and in keeping with Departmental Aboriginal Education policy developments supported this process. The need to continue the increased connection with students' families in their home communities to build on the good work carried out by the team was seen as a priority for sustainability.

For enhanced partnership with local Aboriginal organisations and some service providers it may be worthwhile for each of the team members and/or other staff to share the extra curricula commitment of attending evening meetings and for a workload adjustment to support teachers' commitments to community meetings. Greater exposure to a range of models of consultative practices for working with Aboriginal communities would also be of value to schools like Magenta.

The Department of Education's greater emphasis on Information and Communications Technologies and 'connected classrooms' had already allowed the project to be further revitalized by using technologies such of video conferencing. It was noted that by using this technology, students from Magenta Secondary School were confidently teaching other students in other schools about Aboriginal cultural knowledge.

It is important to emphasise again the significant degree of curriculum change that occurred as a result of the employment of one Aboriginal teacher during the project. If further progress was to be made in the development of Aboriginal perspectives, one way to support that would be for the school to continue to maintain its efforts to employ Aboriginal teachers and para-professionals.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the project undertaken in this school was successful because several critical factors came together to build connections between teachers and students and their Aboriginal communities. There was a willingness to integrate the project into school activity particularly in terms of allowing time for teachers to come together to learn and discuss aspects of their teaching. This professional learning time allowed teachers to gain new insights into their teaching facilitating a greater understanding of local Aboriginal cultural knowledge. Students were visibly more engaged and teachers were excited by using new technologies to enhance student learning.

The project benefited from a supportive executive leadership and this was a key factor in the overall success of the project as it gave the project authority within the school. The employment of Aboriginal teachers as academic mentors was another factor that contributed to the project's success. On the other hand challenges included: needing to work with the everyday pressures of school routines and timetables and an overcrowded curriculum; maintaining good connections with parents; and the local Aboriginal community as well as sustaining the project beyond the funding cycle.

Overall however, much was gained by teachers in their learning journey towards a greater understanding of Aboriginal cultural knowledge and its place within the curriculum.

REFERENCES

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