

# Australian Association for Research in Education 2015

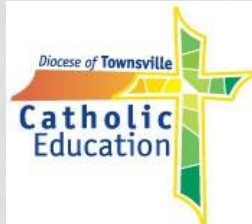


## Responding to Indigenous Students and their Community's Voiced Experiences Regarding Effective Teaching Practices

AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL

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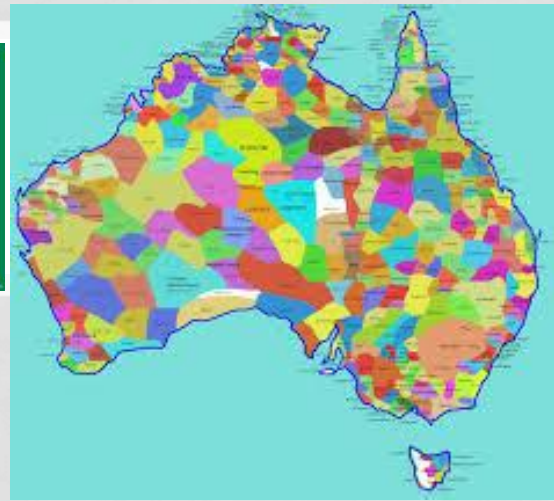
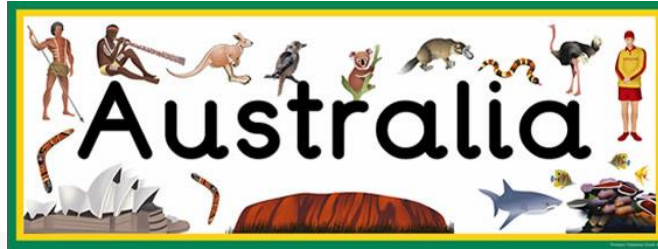
Cathy Day, Gail Laffin, Tammi Webber, Codie Kemp





**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

**& of Indigenous people present**



## Colonization History:

- 1788 Terra Nullius
- Included in Flora and Fauna Act
- 1869 Aboriginal Protection Act
- 1901 White Australia Policy
- 1940s – 1960s Assimilation Policies
- 1962 Voting rights
- 2008 Government Apology to Stolen Generation
- Future – Recognition in our Constitution



# WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF THE PROJECT?

## Mandate for Catholic Education:

- to **improve equitable outcomes** for its Indigenous students
- Catholic Education recognises that engaging teachers in **inclusive curriculum practices is a central focus** in its commitment to provide equitable learning outcomes
- To find out the **teaching practices that best support** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their learning



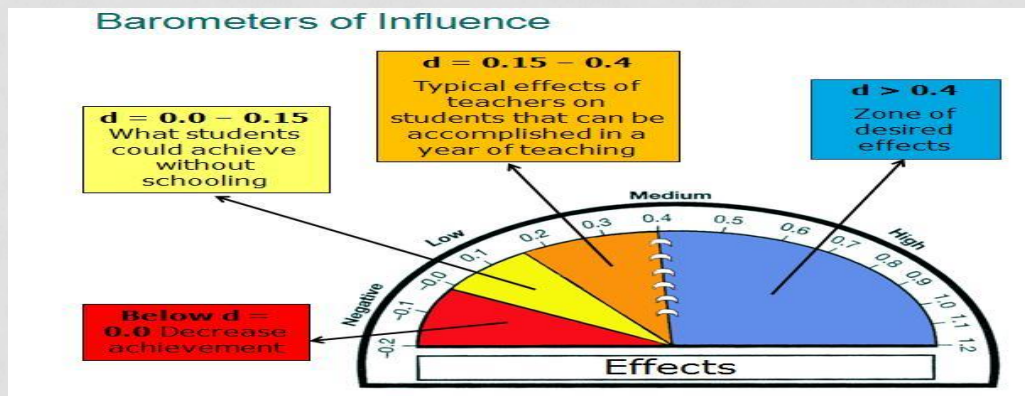
# BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

- Australia's focus on teacher *quality and teaching quality*
- Contributors to this discussion: Noel Pearson (CYI EI & DI), Chris Sarra (Stronger Smarter), Siegfried Engelmann (DI), John Fleming (EI)....



# JOHN HATTIE & VISIBLE LEARNING

- Central character, Professor John Hattie (Visible Learning)
- Attributes of *effective teaching*:
  - Understand the essential learning of their subject – **know their subject well (CK)** and **how to communicate it well (PCK)**
  - Respond to student interests – can **connect** it to students'
  - **Feedback, monitoring** and progress of each student
  - Create **positive classroom learning environments**
  - **Clear learning goals and self-regulation**





# CONCERN ACROSS THE TASMAN



- Concern that Hattie's work is now generalised across all contexts (decontextualised 'invisible') (Snook et al, 2013)
- Nationalistic agendas override Indigenous peoples aspirations for education, especially in the important space of teacher-student interaction (McKinley, 2010). The "Closing of the Gap" objectives (2009); New National curriculum with Embedding Indigenous Perspectives as a cross curriculum priority in every subject area; Personalised Learning Plans for ALL Indigenous students.

***“There is astoundingly little known about what Aboriginal students see as the qualities of effective teachers and the impact this has on educational outcomes.” (Craven, 2011).***

# OUR RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT WORK



- **Phase One** (2014): Conversations with students, parents and teachers to identify the teacher actions that influence student engagement & learning
- **Phase Two** (2015): Develop *Effective Teaching Profiles* used to inform changes in practices
- **Phase Three** (2015-16): Work with teachers of Grade 4, 5 & 6 over the next three years (2014-2016)
- **Phase Four** (2015-2016): Determine influence of these practices on student engagement and learning –

***We want to find out what teacher behaviours as voiced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their communities have the most effect on learning***



# CONVERSATIONS WITH PARENTS

- 28 parents across 4 schools (Townsville and Mount Isa)
  - Open-ended conversations
  - On average, 45 minutes long, and often with an Indigenous teacher or education worker
1. ***What are some things that you would like your child's teachers to know that would help them in their learning?***
  2. ***What can teachers do to help your child or children in their learning?***

# GENERAL THEMES

- Understanding **Our History** with Education
  - Understanding the **“Code-switching”** Required of Our Children
- Understanding Our Perceived **Inability to Change Schooling** as It Exists Today
- Wanting Teachers and Schools to Hold an **Alternative Point of View** of Indigenous Students and the Communities They Represent
  - Wanting Schooling and Teaching to Affirm **Cultural Identity**
- Ensure **Learning Priorities** are Broader than Achievement



# CONVERSATIONS WITH STUDENTS

Questions asked:

- 1. Next year, you will get a new teacher [for a subject]. What do you want that teacher and classroom to do to help you to learn?***
- 2. Tell me about classrooms and teachers where you feel good about yourself and learning***

# GENERAL THEMES

- A classroom climate of **'warm expectations'**
- Building **cultural bridges** as a foundation for respect and learning
- Making **provision for development** of literacy (and numeracy) fluency
- There is a tendency towards **explicit instruction**, emphasizing a gradual release of responsibility
- Student diversity is accommodated to promote **individual engagement** and success
- A **variety of practices** support student learning
- Being attentive to student **health and well being**
- Developing a classroom environment that supports learning through mainly **proactive measures**, especially **relational**
- A classroom environment that affirms and welcomes and includes **community resources**, both physical and human

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# NEXT STEPS (FROM THE QUALITATIVE TO THE QUANTITATIVE)

(HELEN)

- Phase One (2014): Conversations with students, parents and teachers to identify the teacher actions that influence student engagement & learning
- **Phase Two (2014): Develop *Effective Teaching Profiles* used to inform changes in practices (Quantitative)**
- **Phase Three (2015-16): Work with teachers of Grade 4, 5 & 6 over the next three years (2015-2016)**
- **Phase Four (2015-2016): Determine influence of these practices on student engagement and learning –**
- We want to find out what teacher behaviours as voiced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their communities have the most effect on learning

# ACKNOWLEDGE

- School Communities of:
  - St. Kieran's Catholic School in Mt Isa ,
  - St. Joseph's Catholic School in Mt Isa,
  - Good Shepherd Catholic School in Mt Isa;
  - Good Shepherd Community School in Rasmussen;
  - Shalom Christian College in Townsville
- Australian Research Council