

## **ANSN National Forum, August 17, 2007**

### **University of South Australia**

## **Summary of Reflection Notes**

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### **Reflection 1 Issues: What's the nature of the problem?**

- It's hard to be courageous about pedagogy when there's a narrow range of expectational outcomes.
- How is a school set up to understand students' contexts?
- Social and political imperatives and accountability get in the way of effective pedagogy and quality education.
- Traditional pedagogy is about satisfying community perceptions.
- There is a culture of reactive pedagogy.
- There isn't the time to develop innovation as a classroom teacher.
- Ambivalence and blame are often found in schools in challenging circumstances.
- There is strength in sharing social vulnerability.
- The majority of our teachers are near retirement. This can be viewed as a positive and a negative
- Some teachers just teach to the whole class and ignore the individuals who do not engage or understand their lesson
- Students who are finding life a struggle because of complex and difficult family situations
- The performativity focus changes the relationships between students and teachers
- Teachers are now working in isolation and being encouraged/pressured to be compliant.
- Education is affected by the individualisation of our culture and the erosion of the public good in our culture
- A going backwards/privatised view of life is becoming dominant, with materialism reigning supreme.
- There is a confluence of factors that sustain a curriculum and pedagogy that is irrelevant to young people.
- There is an increasing percentage of the poor in society and in our public schools and they are not being resourced appropriately to offer a quality education.

## Reflection 2 Issues: What does it mean?

- Collective responsibility.
- Shared vision, commitment and clarity – social justice must be embedded in school values.
- Size.
- Relationships.
- Pursuit of educational relationships.
- Regular critical reflection and avoiding blame.
- Cognitive coaching.
- Assessment by exhibition increases rigour.
- Share occupational vulnerability as a means of improving.
- Collaborative culture.
- Leadership that supports the project.
- Staffing levels can be a barrier.
- Students as researchers.
- Negotiating the curriculum.
- Schools must identify core fundamentals and core principles to be activated in the classrooms.
- Consider new ways of measurement rather than narrowed literacy/numeracy testing – portfolios as an example.
- Schools/formal education systems are not student-centred – we/they don't put the individual student at the centre.
- There is no sense of responsibility to do our best in response to/for each student – You get down-hearted about this.
- What it involves is identifying a vital interest that a student has and building on it.
- We have families where parents don't trust schools – especially true for indigenous families..
- You need to work around kids' interests, negotiate and discover possible ways of connecting kids to learning.

### Reflection 3: What do we do?

- In 2006 we were officially recognised as a school in crisis and this created the motivation and support from the department to change things.
- Let's keep it simple – build relationships – what are the fundamentals? How do you put relationships at the centre? Not literacy scores and attendance statistics.
- Must challenge how we can develop new logics – how teachers can be supported to use better practices they know about but feel they can not use in their current school contexts
- We need aligned collaboration which means finding people in the unions, departments, universities, philanthropies, schools and media who are ready to commit to common goals and common programs
- Use the networking resources and capital of the ANSN and do more networking
- Document/video and market quality educational innovations and research using a multi-stakeholder conduit to come in behind the BIG projects
- Pursuit of more strategic alliances and partnerships
- More ANSN awareness raising
- Opening the eyes of the masses to the endemic problems in many of our schools
- ANSN website strategy – there are 26 things happening – 26 needs to be pulled into 6
- What are our six BIG questions that frame our strategic purpose and approach?
- Principals to prioritise pedagogy in their work once again
- All schools, districts and head offices to value and be involved in educational inquiry and to listen to each other