

Case Study of a regional education cross-sector careers Community of Practice

Wayne Delaforce QUT

A growing emphasis is being placed on the need for the broader education sector to engage with community in a meaningful and mutually beneficial way. Both in Australia and internationally, governments, the institutions and communities are looking at how the resources and potential of such relationships can be unlocked. Regional and urban education campuses have a multifaceted role within the community. Not only are they the site of traditional learning and research but they are usually one of the regions major employers, economic drivers, cultural, recreational, infrastructure and resource providers.

This Nuts and Bolts presentation explores how the drivers listed above have been integrated into the operations of the Northern Corridor Education Precinct (NCEP) a collaborative education sector initiative in the transport corridor to the north of Brisbane, Australia. How has the NCEP through collaboration, commitment and the grassroots been able to: weaken traditionally strong boundaries between learning institutions and their communities; create spaces of engagement in which discourse can occur and engage their communities both internal and external in a sustainable and mutually beneficial way.

This case will explore how through the activities of the NCEP, a strong, collaborative professional relationship has been developed across the education sectors in Brisbane North. In this particular example the process, outcomes and impacts of a nationally funded collaborative careers education project will be explored. The application for which evolved in response to a series of NCEP co-hosted professional development forums on Career Education in Brisbane North designed to enhance delivery of career education and assist schools to develop best-practice Student Education and Training Plan practices that outline transition pathways for students .

Participant response from these workshops stated strongly that cross-sectoral professional development opportunities needed to be offered to a wider audience which included subject specific teachers, parents and administration support staff across the sector with a common language and understanding of the secondary, vocational and tertiary delivery models and process.

The resultant Community of Practice brings together Career Advisors from North Brisbane schools, Brisbane North Institute of TAFE, Queensland Studies Authority, Queensland University of Technology and Local Community Partnerships and continues to evolve into a sustainable forum and force for change.

The session will present the results of the project and discuss how awareness of the Australian Blueprint for Careers Development and aligned resources has been collaboratively advanced to: teachers and delivery staff that are involved in career education; parents; and community members who have no or limited knowledge of its potential to support children in career decisions.

In summary, this Nut's and Bolts session will showcase how this has been achieved and openly discuss underpinning pathways innovation, cross-sectoral collaboration and the integration of these into teaching, learning and research.