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# Nanango High small motors course gets big results

AN alternative education program at Nanango State High School is not only restoring small motors, it is restoring students' enthusiasm for learning and re-engaging them with school.

In 2004, deputy principal Mark Freeman identified the need for an alternative program to help a group of middle school students who were experiencing difficulties and were at risk of leaving school early.

Principal Brian Hickey said the students had become disengaged for a variety of reasons including poor

literacy and numeracy skills, which had resulted in poor behaviour.

"The fact that these students had not experienced success at school for many years was also contributing to their poor behaviour and lack of interest," Mr Hickey said.

"We made the decision to develop the small motors restoration course, in partnership with two local businesses, and employ a fully qualified mechanic, Mr Ian Enright, to work with the students.

"The students have the opportunity to develop skills in the repair and

maintenance of motors from lawn mowers, whipper snippers, agricultural pumps, ride-on mowers and chain saws under the supervision of the mechanic.

"At the same time a series of booklets were developed for students that focus on the literacy and numeracy skills required to work in the automotive field.

"Putting these skills into a realistic context is a very effective way to get students to engage with the content," he said.

Mr Hickey said to further improve

students' literacy skills, they completed a daily diary of their activities during the course and this was checked with a focus on correct spelling and use of mechanical terms.

"The outcomes of the program for these students have been overwhelming.

"Students who were on the verge of exclusion because of continuous poor behaviour are now engaged and working well both in their mainstream classes and in the Small Motors Program.

"For many of these students this

is their first positive experience with schooling for many years and it's reflected in improved attendance, attitude and participation.

"The relationship developed between the students, caregivers and the school has developed into one of support and mutual respect."

The students are now participating in work experience at local mechanic workshops in the community, increasing further the link between the school and local businesses and improving opportunities for future employment.



Adam Connolly (above) and Sheridan Orman (below) with some of their artwork that formed part of the Arranounbai Arts Enterprise "Belong to us" exhibition on display at Parliament House recently.



## Redcliffe students' artwork graces Parliament House

ARTWORK produced by two Redcliffe State High School students was put on display at Parliament House last month as part of the Arranounbai Arts Enterprise "Belong to us" exhibition.

Adam Connolly and Sheridan Orman exhibited seven pieces that they had produced as part of "Kidz 4 Artsake" — an after-school program run at Redcliffe State High School in partnership with Arranounbai Arts Enterprise.

The Kidz 4 Artsake exhibition focuses on getting 15 to 16 year-old Indigenous students to connect more productively with their schooling through traditional and contemporary Indigenous art.

Education Minister Anna Bligh congratulated the two students on their inclusion in the exhibition and their participation in the Kidz 4 Artsake program.

"The students learn about Indigenous art, including the different designs and styles, under the guidance of local Redcliffe Indigenous artist and program coordinator Gene Blow," Ms Bligh said.

"They also have the benefit of the knowledge of other artists, including the three artists-in-residence from Arranounbai Arts Enterprise who regularly visit the students to share their unique styles of Indigenous art.

"The goal of the program is to have the students produce artwork that is of a standard suitable for exhibiting.

"As well developing artistic skills and creativity, the program is also about increasing students' self-confidence and self-esteem as a way to keep them at school and learning.

"Kidz 4 Artsake is a terrific example of schools working in partnership with their communities to develop innovative programs for students who may be having difficulty with mainstream education.

"Programs such as this will play a crucial role in keeping young people interested and engaged with learning and preparing them for success in the world beyond school," Ms Bligh said.



Taking part in Toogoolawah State High School's Certificate II in Transport course are, front from left, Matthew Szablewski, Jared Clarke, Boyd Pates, Glen Cunningham and Warren Chin and, back from left, Adam Mooney, Sam Luder, Adam Jeffery, Daniel Willett, Jarl Nieminen and teacher Dave Hutton.

## Trucking course a first at Toogoolawah

TOOGOLAWAH State High School is offering students Australia's first school-based trucking course in partnership with the Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE (SQIT).

Fourteen Year 11 and 12 students are taking the Certificate II in Road Transport course, which is being offered over two years as part of the normal curriculum at the school.

The course covers basic road transport and warehousing skills such as maintenance, servicing, haulage documentation and other competencies needed to succeed in the industry.

The teachers from the school and road transport instructors from SQIT are delivering theory and practical lessons.

Toogoolawah principal Eion McAllister said this was the first time such a program had been delivered within a school environment.

"The proximity of Toogoolawah to state and national transport routes and an employment shortage in the road transport industry were key drivers behind our decision to run this course," Mr McAllister said.

"The school's initiative has been backed by local Brisbane Valley business groups and industry representatives.

"The initiative is introducing young people to the transport industry and providing them with the skills employers value.

"The partnership developed between the school and the local transport industry is providing students with a valuable career pathway that will go a long way to preparing them for a full apprenticeship or traineeship when they leave school.

"Companies such as Toll North Pty Ltd and local transport industry groups have offered an opportunity for students to complete work placements alongside the instruction and

training so their skills are industry ready," he said.

Student Warren Chin is set to undertake work placement at Nolan's Transport in Gatton.

"It will be great to get real-world experience and put what we are

learning in the classroom into practice," he said.

"I may not get too much experience with the big rigs at this stage, but it will be good to learn what goes on at the depot, things like weighing, loading and vehicle maintenance."

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Contact:  
Alisa Tulloch  
Education Coordinator  
Phone: 3488 08 99  
Mobile: 0418 808 759

Stephanie Wilson  
Program Director  
Phone: 3488 08 99  
Mobile: 0413 704 983