**Cranbrook State School and their AEDC journey**

This is a story about how a school began to look deeper into the AEDC and the value they found in exploring what it told them about their community and how they could further develop their transition program.

In 2015 Cranbrook State School implemented an intensive transition program to enable children to experience a positive start to school.

**Building on a successful transition program**

*Jeff Capell, Principal at Cranbrook State School:*

At the beginning of 2016, our prep teachers gave us exceptional feedback around the benefit of the transition programme, the value of the education was able to begin the transition, had begun. And the transition had paid off in the sense of the learning can begin straightaway.

**Some children were missing out**

*Jeff Capell, Principal at Cranbrook State School:*

We know that we only ... Out of that, we had about 60 to 70% of the kids involved in the transition programme. We still had a 30% of new enrolments that we hadn't seen before. That caused a little bit of concern, but because the critical mass of the group had been through the transition, it actually made the transition into prep for those ones who hadn't experienced it, a lot easier because it was just going with the flow.

**Prompted to use the AEDC:**

*Jeff Capell, Principal at Cranbrook State School:*

One of the results of the transition process that we have is a stronger partnership with our early childhood providers.

They will visit us and us as a school will go and visit the centres to see what they're doing and how they're doing it and trying to align some of our practises to benefit the students.

In 2016, we had all of our local providers actually ring me and ask me about the AEDC data and how we're using it and what we were doing”

**A common misconception - the AEDC not really useful for schools:**

*Jeff Capell, Principal at Cranbrook State School:*

As a school we really looked at it at very superficial layers. We hadn't, we hadn’t really drilled down into it and we hadn't really seen the intent or the purpose of it because we saw it more as sitting outside of our core business because effectively it was telling us what we were receiving and we couldn't see how we could influence what we were receiving it was just telling us things we sort of already knew.

**The value in taking a closer look**

*Jeff Capell, Principal at Cranbrook State School:*

The data itself when we began engaging with it, the first phase didn't tell us too much. As a school, the domains within the data were very homogeneous. There was no real spike. There was no real clear this is where we need to start. From that, as a school we had to change our mindset when we used the AEDC data. As schools, we tend to look for the trends and we drill right down, whereas with the AEDC data, it was more around the trend side of the data sitting at a higher level. The part that we noticed when we continued to play in the space, we didn't try and come up with a strategy, we invested a lot of time in engaging with the data and really conversing with the data as to what it was telling us. The bit that stood out, there was a commonality around the 33%, which was the 33% of students who aren't in our transition programme. There's the 33% of students who showed an at risk of not transitioning successfully into prep after three months. There was the 33% who don't engage with Early Childhood providers. This 30%, 33% commonality across the board was something that only came out of the data once we'd played in that space for a long time.

The 30% that we don't see, we know from the trend data what type of children they will be as well. And the majority is they're usually the ones with the higher needs or higher at risk students.

**Connecting with partners**

*Vicki McCaffrey, Transitions & Partnerships Officer, North QLD Region:*

We wanted to explore a little bit about the 33% and the barriers that those families may be facing prior to coming to school. In order to do that, we probably needed to connect with a range of partners to really get a broader range of information, but also test some of our assumptions, as well.

*Jeff Capell, Principal at Cranbrook State School:*

We had a lot of conversations. Both looking at a data level, but also at an anecdotal level with our partners as to what was coming out, what were they experiencing. The commonality amongst our Early Childhood partners was the 33%.

Vicki McCaffrey, Transitions & Partnerships Officer, North QLD Region

The AEDC provides a common language that all of the partners can use and it also gives them a focus or a goal that they're all fairly committed to because most of the partners are all working towards the same outcomes as well, from their perspectives. The AEDC is a good way to focus your attention.

**The value of broad partnerships**

*Jeff Capell, Principal at Cranbrook State School:*

We just did a lot of stereotypical assuming rather than conversing with our partners and actually getting clearer facts and information. Once we had the facts and information, that led us to a lot more explicit strategies and explicit processes we could go down rather than just assumptions that sometimes we make.

Working with our partners, when we focused on the 33%, who were those children and what is their lives within the Cranbrook setting was something that we explored and we couldn't explore ... We explored that better when we had partners from housing, from department of communities, our indigenous group. Once we got those people at the table, we were able to get that anecdotal evidence and the evidence that allows us to come up with strategies that would be better suited for our clientele and our 33%.

**Capitalising on diverse knowledge and experience**

*Vicki McCaffrey, Transitions & Partnerships Officer, North QLD Region:*

Having a lot of people together, you do bring a different mindset and a different skill set to the whole process. Therefore, everyone can help shape the outcome to produce something that perhaps you hadn't considered before.

**A better informed strategy**

*Jeff Capell, Principal at Cranbrook State School:*

Ironically, when we went through the whole process, our strategy that we've developed is a play group, which was one of the things that a lot of people at the table said, "We're not doing that" because it hadn't worked, but when we looked at the partnerships and we looked at the data and we looked at options of engaging with our 33%, the outcome of the play group wasn't the important part. The important part was the partnerships with the other community groups, which allowed us to try and target our 33% to get them onto a pathway.

To start exploring how you might use the AEDC in your planning visit

<http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/aedcqueensland/>

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