**Every student with disability succeeding vignette transcript –**

**Transition to Junior Secondary – Whitfield State School to Trinity Bay State High School**

- My name's Stephen Bell, and I'm one of the Assistant Regional Directors in Far North Queensland. Transition is challenging for all students, even our students who go from classroom to classroom, from school to school, find it very very difficult. But our most vulnerable learners find it extremely difficult.

It's really important that we have in place all of the structures and support mechanisms to ensure a student can move into school and then between each of the phases of learning. It's a critical piece of the work that all schools need to plan carefully for, and make sure that they have in place strategies and processes that meet the needs of all learners.

- My name is Nancy, I'm in Year 6, from Whitfield State School. I'm transitioning to Trinity Bay State High School. Yeah, I'm a little bit nervous, but I can still handle it throughout this year and next year.

- I'm Melinda Whipp, I'm an Advisory Teacher for Students with Vision Impairment in the Far North Queensland region. And my role is to build capability within staff and schools and leadership positions, to support students with vision impairment in their schools. I've been working with Nancy and Whitfield State School for the last three years, once Nancy was verified with a vision impairment; And we're always looking towards the next environment, so we were thinking from the very beginning about high school: Where is she going? What skills does she need? What do we need to develop within the school staff and within Nancy, so she is best prepared on that first day of high school.

So we thought about who we needed to include in the conversation; Advisory Teacher for Vision Impairment, there's the HOSES, the Students with Disability Teacher, Nancy most importantly, her family, orientation mobility specialists, assistive technology specialists, and looking forward to outside agencies such as Vision Australia and Guide Dogs Queensland as well. We find that our students with vision impairment and students with disability often do require additional time and opportunity to practice new skills, learn new concepts, feel safe and secure within environments and relationships.

So we decided that Nancy, as well as the generic school program that was running, that she would highly benefit from an extended, more specific transition program to her high school. We broke it down into different components. Orientation and mobility, so she's having physical transition sessions to the school where she's going on a regular basis, meeting staff, orienteering around the environment, exploring her environment and learning her way around. We're also looking at technology, so that she's comfortable and confident with using a laptop computer and any specialist software that she may use to access and participate in the curriculum. We're also doing a lot of self-advocacy work, so that she understands about her vision impairment, and can ask for help or decline help when necessary, and that she feels safe in talking to people about herself. We've had lots of opportunity to meet staff in her new school environment. So she's already really familiar with the head of Special Education Services and teachers and aides in that environment, and different classroom teachers and members of the leadership team as well.

- My name is Michelle Bordonaro, and I'm the Head of Special Education at Trinity Bay High School. We started working with Nancy's team in Term 1 of this year, which is fairly unusual; we usually don't work with the actual students transitioning into our high school until Term 4. But in Nancy's case, she's quite a unique student. Because of her disability, she needed a more intense transition program. There'll be quite a number of people supporting Nancy whilst here at high school, and we've already started working with those people. We've got the physiotherapist, occupational therapist that will guide us into supporting Nancy.

For the majority of Nancy's classes, she will be working alongside her peers in the mainstream setting, however there will be times where she has specialist programs back within the Special Ed setting, and these programs may have been developed by occupational therapists, and physiotherapists. And in addition, she may have further orientation and mobility training around the school, and we will be working with the Advisory Teacher for Vision Impairment and the Advisory Teacher for Orientation and Mobility. We've got all the information that the primary school has fed through to us during the year, so as we can set up a perfect program for Nancy when she starts.

- [NANCY] I started high school, and my emotions were on the edge of my eyes. I was kind of scared, nervous, but I held it, and I loved it at the same time, because I knew some people there, and I thought people were going to make fun of me, but no! People start to love you because you're being yourself. The best thing about it is the teachers. I love the teachers here, and even the students. I've made a lot of friends since day one. The transition was good; it feels comfortable, and it feels like I'm actually with my friends.

- [MICHELLE] We're in week five of Term 1, Nancy seems to be settling in really nicely. Her confidence and her independence just seems to be so much bigger than what it was last year when she was beginning the transitioning process. She's been able to establish a really nice relationship with her teachers and the support staff that are here at Trinity Bay. So it seems that everything we're doing is creating a really positive start for Nancy, for her transition to high school, and hopefully from here we'll just keep growing in a positive way.

(Link:  <https://mediasite.eq.edu.au/mediasite/Play/7d70703a2c654382b1e0c303772e50841d>)