



Significant Episode: Collaborative Planning

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Finding 7.2: Families

Work with Indigenous education officers as they can be critical to building strong connections, resilience and trust between schools and their communities and families. Ensure they have a central role in curriculum development.

Collaborative planning between all educators – Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.

During Mad Maths Monday groups I was working with Carla, one of the parents at our school who has since become an Aboriginal Education Worker (AEW).

Initially, in preparation for the group, I would plan the maths aspect and cultural aspect for the lesson and Carla would teach the cultural aspect. At the beginning of the lesson I would show Carla the lesson, as I would any other teaching assistant who was helping me in the classroom. I thought this was a good set up and was working well.

Then one day Carla quickly mentioned that it would be good if she could get the lessons more in advance so she wasn't put on the spot when explaining information about the cultural aspect. This made me stop and completely re-assess the way I was 'using' Carla. I had assumed that because she was Aboriginal she knew all information about her culture. Of course this could not have been the case, but it had not crossed my mind. I also realised that in me planning everything and then telling Carla what we were doing, I was not in partnership with her and not getting the full benefit of having an AEW working with our group.

“Collaborative planning needs to be a focus for the future.”

I now sit down with Carla at the beginning of each term and discuss the cultural knowledge and maths knowledge we want the students to learn. I also give the lesson to her in as much advance as possible so that she can research what she needs to and change anything she would like to.

In understanding that Carla and I are in a partnership and on equal playing fields the group has benefited so much as the quality of the learning has increased dramatically.

Successful collaboration will allow this program to continue into the future. Some parents of students in stage 1 have been involved in different aspects of the project. The inclusion of Aboriginal parents in the collaboration of planning across all stages to ensure we know what is appropriate for our Aboriginal students, and how we will teach it will sustain change in our school community.

Some questions to prompt discussion:

1. *What was the important learning for Kate in this Significant Episode?*
2. *What other interesting or important aspects are in this Significant Episode?*