



Professional Engagement

Standard 6 – Professional Learning

Significant Episode: Leading Change

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Finding 6.1: Approach

Have a focused, structured approach to what you want to achieve as a team and establish common core values and attitudes.

Although I had taught at Tannum Sands High School for a while, I was new to the Head of Department (Mathematics) role. We had talked about using investigations more in our teaching for a while, but we hadn't actually done much about it.

What happened?

As a Mathematics Department we decided to make pedagogy and teaching our focus, and throughout the three years of the *Make It Count* project we gradually incorporated investigations into our teaching. As a Head of Department I found that there were a few things that helped facilitate this process, including:

- Experiencing good quality, focussed professional development from highly regarded mathematics advisors. For example, we heard Charles Lovitt present at the conference and then he visited the school and did some demonstration lessons with the students.
- Devoting specific time in department meetings to focus on teaching, and to share lesson ideas.
- Specifically modifying our unit plans and assessments to include appropriate investigations.
- Dividing the work to develop the new unit plans across all the teaching staff and to then ensure that the units and activities were easily shared and ready to use.

“Devoting specific time in department meetings to focus on teaching and to share lesson ideas.”

Each teacher was given two or three lessons to convert into a shared lesson plan that included a mathematical investigation. These investigations primarily came from the maths300 program, and the teachers were each responsible for converting the maths300 lesson into a usable document. These revised investigative lessons were included in the unit plans and placed on the shared drive of the school network.

Some questions to prompt discussion:

1. *How does your school make changes to the way mathematics is taught?*
2. *How might investigative learning benefit Indigenous learners (and non-Indigenous students)?*
3. *What other interesting or important aspects are in this Significant Episode?*

