

Significant Episode: Aboriginal Educators Take *First Steps*

St Peter Claver College
Nerang Cluster

Finding 2.1: Content

Know that teachers and education officers must continually improve their mathematical content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge.

The significance in this story lies in the investment the school makes in the professional learning in mathematics for Aboriginal educators who support teachers. One of the outcomes of this is the critical building of connections between the school and community that is learning oriented (Cluster Finding 7.2) and the development of Aboriginal educators as leaders within the school and the community.

Aboriginal educators take First Steps

Two Aboriginal educators from the Nerang Cluster undertook the *First Steps in Mathematics (FSIM): Number*. Gloria Wilson and Cheryl Quelhurst are part of a strong Indigenous education team from the Cluster's Key School, St Peter Claver College, near Ipswich in Queensland. Gloria and Cheryl used diagnostic tasks to identify where their students were up to and any misconceptions they may have had that might have prevented them from moving on in their mathematical understandings. The Nerang Cluster also trained an *FSIM* facilitator from each of their schools to form a network of support for their teachers in improving maths outcomes of their Indigenous students.

“One of the outcomes is the critical building of connections between the school and community...and the development of Aboriginal educators as leaders within the school and the community.”

What Works wrote a case study about this:

<http://www.whatworks.edu.au/dbAction.do?cmd=displaySitePage1&subcmd=select&id=528>

Some questions to prompt discussion:

1. *How do you best learn mathematics? How do you invest in your own professional learning in mathematics education? How does it impact on your pedagogy and vice versa?*
2. *Through the training, Gloria and Cheryl were able to offer insights into the mathematical misconceptions Indigenous students might have had. What might be significant or important about these insights for the teachers they work with?*
3. *What other interesting or important aspects are in this Significant Episode?*



Gloria Wilson and Cheryl Quelhurst