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ANANGU EMPOWERMENT

*Richard Costi & Helen Deans **

In the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples, it is appropriate to celebrate the successes of Anangu empowerment in the Anangu schools.

Anangu Schools are a unique cluster of eight schools based on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands in the north west of South Australia, that cater for Child Parent Centres (C.P.C) to adult education needs. These S. A. Education Department schools are nestled in the Musgrave, Everard, Mann and Tomkinson ranges.

Anangu schools cater for Aboriginal and non Aboriginal students, but primarily for the tradition oriented Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara peoples. Operational and policy control of schools has been handed over to the Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Education Committee (PYEC.) which has an Anangu Director of Education, and a Manager and Co-ordinating Principal as support officers. This all Anangu committee has individual membership from each community, and Anangu Co-ordinators who work in joint management of schools with principals.

Essentially, the process of empowerment has allowed Anangu to make decisions about the education of their children under the Aboriginal right to self determination, with the strong support of the S.A. Ed Dept as the principal funding body. Policy control was granted in 1987, and operational control in 1992, and the P.Y. Education Committee takes on issues one at a time; planning, implementing and evaluating each initiative. They have recently asked for TAFE to come into their model and be managed locally. While the schools are managed under the cohesion of the PYEC, each school community has the opportunity to apply its own direction and develop policies pertinent to the needs

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 - Article endorsed by Owen Burton, Director of Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Education Office, for further information their office may be contacted at Ernabella, S.A. via Alice Springs 0871.

of the community. One notable example of this control has been the adoption of "Two Way Education principles which mean, the western and Anangu domains are separated inside the school curriculum and timetable. The notion behind such a model, is for children to grow up with a strong Anangu identity but to also understand how the western world works. The Anangu domain is the responsibility of Anangu employed in the school who use Anangu elders where appropriate. This policy change has increased the focus of teaching English as a second language (ESL) in our schools. We employ a regional ESL Co-ordinator, ESL teachers in each school, and all staff participate in a 10 week "ESL in Anangu Schools" course, which is complemented by our locally written English Language Curriculum document. Additionally, Open Access courses have been written specifically for Anangu secondary students, using ESL and inclusive curriculum principles.

Principals have all been employed with joint accountability to PYEC, the local community, and Education Department requirements. Anangu made decisions over-ride Departmental policies and careful negotiation is required if they are in conflict. Our selection policy for principals is unique: Ed Dept panels work in complete collaboration with the local community throughout the process. The panel puts forward candidates it believes to have the skills to be a principal, and the local community selects the person with whom the community believes it can work. The interviews are often open to the whole community and Anangu put a range of questions to each applicant.

We currently have three Anangu Co-ordinators in place working alongside principals in joint management, and with the completion of a training video production which outlines this joint role, Co-ordinators will be selected by local communities for our other five schools.

In 1992, PYEC requested that the Child Parent Centres be run by Anangu instructors. Negotiations took place with SAIT, the Ed Dept, and the Teachers' Registration Board, and we now have provisionally registered Anangu Education Workers running our CPCs. The consultancy team, based at the PY Education Office at Ernabella, developed a complete curriculum kit for CPCs which allows Anangu to take control of the program and provides a curriculum balance. It is a clever device in which activities have been written up in accessible

English; drawings are included depicting each activity; and learning concepts are recorded. Activities are colour coded and a timetable is set up so that the balance of curriculum is delivered each day. Anangu trainers, employed in each school, assist the Anangu CPC teacher in programming and planning.

Anangu training also provides support for Anangu employees in the schools. At Ernabella School, the focus of training is on teaching skills, Anangu decision making, and personal skills development identified by each participant. The outcomes of this program include Anangu Education Workers taking classes independently and Anangu staff making decisions about how the school runs. This decision making group works in collaboration with the whole staff, school leadership and school council. Such empowerment has culminated in Anangu domain days in which AEWs, under the direction of the Anangu Co-ordinator and School Warden, have run the school without any non Anangu support, allowing teachers to be released to participate in training and development activities.

We currently have three Anangu teacher graduates who have completed the Anangu Teacher Education Program. PYEC and the Ed Dept financially support this University of S.A run program to provide on-site lecturers in six Anangu schools. The long term aim is to have Anangu graduate teachers delivering primary and junior primary education.

This year we have established the Murputja Homelands' Education School. This school supports four homeland communities with the key teaching instructors being Anangu Education Workers. The principal and a teacher support the AEWs, and students are timetabled to come into the Murputja School on set days for specialist teaching. This model has been established to support the independent nature of homelands' communities and has been fully negotiated with each homeland community. An all Anangu board of management sets the direction for the school. This truly innovative model melds traditional lifestyle patterns of Anangu society with western education.

In summary, what has been achieved, is true Anangu empowerment: Anangu are making umbrella decisions for their cluster of schools;

operationalising their plans, applying their own directions in individual communities, and using Anangu forums to influence school decision making. Such change hasn't been achieved quickly and could not have been done without the support of Ministers of Education, Director Generals, senior Ed Dept and Aboriginal Ed officers, non Anangu teaching staff, school leadership and the S.A Institute of Teachers. But significantly, we have facilitated Anangu seizing the agenda and they are working towards their self determined goals with negotiated support structures.

Koorie Photo Kit

This year, 1993, the Year of The Indigenous People, the Swan Hill North Primary School ASSPA Committee have commissioned a limited series of photographs of Koorie children for use as a stimulus response resource in the classroom.

This photo kit is aimed at filling a void for positive role modelling. The photographs are such that a range of emotions are expressed. The Swan Hill North Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness Committee anticipate classroom teachers utilising the photo kit to its fullest potential.

To date there have been very few, if any, kits of this nature produced and more importantly, under the direction of Koorie parents. This reflects a close and committed relationship between the Swan Hill North Primary School and Koorie parents, particularly for Koorie Education. The children in the photographs have been purposely photographed displaying a number of emotions and it is anticipated that the classroom teacher can then stimulate discussion from these.

The Swan Hill North ASSPA are delighted to be able to sponsor such a unique set of photographs. Cost: \$20:00 plus postage

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