Yagoona Public School
Learning for all at the Community Hub

Context

Yagoona Public School is situated in south-western Sydney. It has an enrolment of 523 students with 96 per cent of students from language backgrounds other than English. The school has a Family Occupation and Education Index (FOEI) rating of 124 (2014/15 average).

The school wanted to be a ‘community beacon’ with a holistic approach to engaging its socio-economically diverse community and to share information and access to resources while building the capacity of the community in decision making. The school developed a strong relationship with the Yagoona Public School Community Hub which is based in the school. The Community Hubs program is an initiative of Community Hubs Australia and is supported by the Scanlon Foundation and the Australian Government Department of Social Services. Community hubs link families and their preschool children to support services, learning opportunities and the wider community.

Enhancing community consultation

The Yagoona Public School Community Hub is central to the school’s approach to community consultation. The school consulted with the hub to bring local services spanning education, health and community into the school. The hub has full use of the school’s grounds and facilities. Activities include:

- community agency talks with bilingual workers
- language specific parent discussion groups
- courses in learning English, first aid, parenting classes, financial budgeting and fitness
- parent-run playgroups with training provided for the facilitators
- parent-run activities including cultural cooking, talk and walk group, toddler story time
- excursions to libraries and health service providers.

Through the hub, local agencies conducted courses for parents and community members including Computers for Beginners with the Bankstown TAFE Outreach and Cooking with the Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre. The school utilised an early learning outreach service to care for preschool children while parents were engaged in activities. The school newsletters and Facebook page featured updates from the hub with details of future events and photos of events held at the school.

Achievements

Yagoona Public School’s strong relationship with the hub ensured the success of the community consultation strategies. In consultation with the school, the hub:

- encouraged greater parent engagement and built a sense of belonging for parents at the school
- connected parents and community members to a range of available support services
- created friendships and support networks
- facilitated consultation with parents and community members on the school’s vision and future directions
- improved the transition of children into Kindergarten through the parent run playgroup which provided opportunities for parents to network and create friendships with each other before their children commenced schooling.

Sustainability

The school plans to continue with the existing programs to build the capacity of parents and community members and support growth in community consultation. Additionally, the school will distribute surveys to families of Kindergarten students on their expectations of the school. The survey will be reissued later in the year to gauge levels of satisfaction of families and encourage consultation for the school’s future directions. In consultation with parents, the school will develop a new individual student educational plan proforma which will facilitate conversations with parents and collaborative goal setting for students.

For more information on Yagoona Public School visit their website.