Learning for Today and for Tomorrow!
Peer Coaching Partnerships at Peregian Springs State School

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Peer Coaching Partnerships at Peregian

- Peregian Springs State School
  - Opened in 2010 with 264 students
  - Now caters for 1030 students Prep to Year 6
  - 43 classes and 120 staff
  - 130kms north of Brisbane in a fast growing area
• Things that led to a natural progression to training and supporting coaches
  • Complimented other PD such as Choice Theory and Reality Therapy
  • Planned for the key elements – budget, access to quality training, meaningful approach to developing performance development plans,
  • encouraged staff to see each other as experts through a Classroom Visit Program – feedback occurred naturally
Professional Capital (Fullan and Hargreaves)

- Three kinds of capital that comprise ‘professional capital’:
  1. human capital (the talent of individuals);
  2. social capital (the collaborative power of the group); and
  3. decisional capital (the wisdom and expertise to make sound judgments about learners that are cultivated over many years).

PC = (HC, SC, DC)
All staff as part of their core business, accept individual responsibility for not only their performance i.e. CONTRIBUTING to the organisation’s overall performance & culture, but also for DEVELOPING, EVALUATING, DEMONSTRATING & SHARING their own performance.
• The outcomes
  • Commitment to training and supporting each other to learn
  • Deep collaborative structures throughout the school (not limited to year level teams)
  • Truly professional conversation as opposed to ‘pity parties’
  • School Opinion Survey – 100% of staff highly satisfied with their professional development (access to and quality)
  • School Review Team 2015 made special mention of the learning culture entrenched in every area of the school
Staff quotes

• ‘Training in the Growth Coaching model has not only given me a framework within which to conduct professional discussions with colleagues, it has given me the opportunity to engage with teaching and administrative staff in a safe, non-judgmental environment, assisting me to move my teaching practice forward via guided self-reflection. These skills have also be beneficial when interacting with parents and even in my personal life.’ (Andrea)

• Reflective conversations through peer coaching enhanced collaboration and sharpened the focus on student outcomes. Not surprisingly, the enhanced collaboration lead to improved teaching practice which also enhanced student engagement (this was verified by data collected throughout the process). (Andrew)
Staff quotes

• ‘After the first group went through the coaching program we noticed a change in the way teachers spoke to each other. The quality of conversations improved and lunch time discussion seemed to be more positive and productive. The non-judgemental nature of the program has allowed us to open up more about classroom dilemmas and feel more supported when making tough decisions.’ (Sarah and Jess)

• Prior to being at Peregain I led a school in a region who mandated twice termly checklists for staff. I would go through classes and tick off that a teacher is ‘doing’ the expected. Our conversations appeared to centre around these check lists. After completing my GROWTH training my conversations were not around meeting a ‘minimum’ but around empowering staff to take ownership of their learning and development. This has led to staff being passionate about their learning journey showcased in high levels of staff wellbeing. (Michael)
Staff quotes

- ‘Peer coaching has allowed me to develop my listening skills, reflective practices and ultimately my teaching through frequent, supportive and meaningful conversations with my colleagues. As opposed to supervision, we support and teach each other after developing our own instructional and professional goals. I have ownership and increased empowerment working within this model and would highly recommend any professional to consider undertaking Coaching if they wish to improve their leadership and management techniques.’ (Pam)

- ‘Whether you are in the role of coach or on the receiving end, I find myself constantly reflecting my own teaching practice, making it a rewarding and validating experience.’ (Sara)

- Coaching allows teachers to unmuddle the chaos in their head. (Kerryn)
Staff quotes

• ‘As a coach I felt so fulfilled when I saw that ‘A-Ha’ moment on the other person’s face. Whilst being coached I was able to find the clarity I needed. I was able to implement a plan of attack and think outside the box.’ (Danae)

• ‘When a coach can ask me a deep question at the right time it stops me in my tracks and makes me think more deeply. I am no longer looking for a surface fix but something that will have greater impact’ - Kylie

• ‘Coaching taught me to truly listen, so I didn’t interrupt and try to solve the problem. When you actively listen, you use guided questions so the person can find the solutions themselves’. (Chris)
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Double Dinking The Bike

A Growth Coaching Analogy
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School Review 2015 2.1 Key findings

The strong school culture and ethos underpins all school operations and decision-making.

• All involved with the school comment upon the caring environment that envelops the school and all express great pride in the school, its efforts and achievements. Staff and students display a positive approach in all facets of the school. Staff give high priority to understanding and addressing the learning and wellbeing needs of all students.

The school operates with professional integrity and trust.

• Staff display a professional approach to all aspects of teaching and learning and are supportive of each other in teaching teams across a wide range of professional activities. They demonstrate a strong collegial approach to teaching and undertake school specific and staff led professional development.

There is a strong moral imperative to do the best for children.

• Caring relationships are a feature of the school and within this environment, the school cultivates an environment of innovation and inquiry. Multiple learning opportunities exist for students; a professional staff are attuned to the learning needs of students and utilise a wide range of strategies and pedagogies, including digital technologies, to ensure effective teaching and learning take place. The school operates from a strong research base and has a core philosophy in Choice theory, which underpins the schools operation, and philosophy.
There are multiple modalities of teaching and learning within a whole-school structure.

• The school places a strong emphasis on identifying the learning needs of students and then selecting the most appropriate pedagogy to use for the identified students. Teachers use research-based pedagogies that most suit the learning style of the student.

• National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) performance data over the 2010-14 periods shows consistently high scores in National Minimum Standards, Mean Scale Scores and Upper Two Bands (U2B) relative to the nation and Queensland schools in Year 3 and Year 5.

The school has a clear explicit improvement agenda.

• The school improvement agenda is embedded in all facets of school operations. It is evidence-based, research-driven and is expressed in terms of improvements in measurable student outcomes with direct links to associated timelines. Reading, writing and numeracy are the key priorities for 2015.

• Data is used purposefully and has informed the improvement agenda.
Strong partnerships with the community exist.

• The school has actively sought diverse ways to enhance student learning and wellbeing by developing meaningful partnerships with parents and families, other government agencies, local high schools and pre-Prep providers, and support agencies, local businesses and community organisations.

• The school is held in very high regard within its community and is a school of choice for the community.