Centring Anangu Voices

A research project exploring how Nyangatjatjara College might better strengthen Anangu aspirations through education

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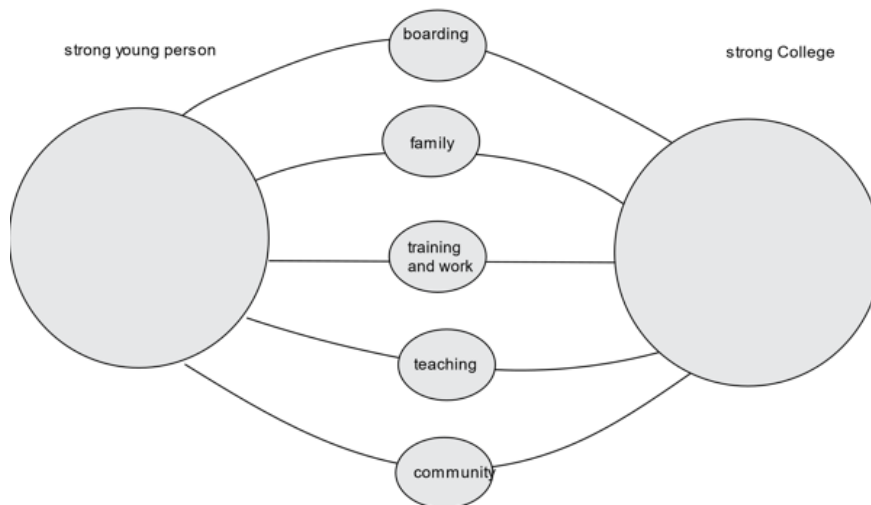Lorraine King

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NINTI ONE : INNOVATION FOR REMOTE AUSTRALIA

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Research conducted by Ninti One Ltd in conjunction with Nyangatjatjara College

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Executive Summary

Since 2011, Nyangatjatjara College has conducted a series of student and community interviews aimed at providing feedback to the school regarding student experiences and their future aspirations. These narratives have developed significantly over the last seven years and this study, a broader research piece, highlights a shift from expressions of social and economic uncertainty to narratives that are more explicit in articulating clear directions for the future. These include:

- A strong expectation that education should engage young people in training and work experiences as a pathway to employment in the community
- Strong and consistent articulation of the importance of intergenerational engagement to
    1. Ground young people in their stories, identity, language and culture
    2. Encourage young people to remain focussed on positive and productive pathways through mentoring
    3. Prepare young people for work in fields such as ranger work and cultural tourism
- Utilise a three community approach to semi-residential boarding using the Yulara facilities to provide access to expert instruction through intensive delivery models
- Metropolitan boarding programs have realised patchy outcomes for students and families. The benefits of these experiences need to be built on through realistic planning for students who inevitably return (between 3 weeks and 18 months from commencement). The risks of such approaches need to be addressed in preparing young people and their families for boarding.
- Families are seen as central to the success of young people in and out of school. The school needs to encourage positive family involvement in schooling and also be actively engaging with families in the community.
- Teachers need to have high expectations of students, encouraging them individually to achieve their best. When returning from boarding, they want positive social and educational gains to be built on in the community. School needs to be engaging and demanding to drive attendance and achievement levels and to encourage families to wholeheartedly push their kids to return to, and stay at school when they aren't attending.

Student and community aspirations were discussed in terms of the local community context. Some called for current and potential employment opportunities to be mapped and training and work experience programs to be designed to place young people into work. The study found that families were appreciative of the College's work, in particular when students had returned from boarding schools within short timeframes. We found recent school leavers succeeding in, and enjoying work but a stronger whole school and community focus is needed to strengthen and develop the five areas identified as important: training and work (in school, post-school local community options), family (engagement, in-school involvement), good teaching (high expectations and rigour, both ways learning), community engagement (mentoring, language, culture, job mapping), and boarding (semi-residential and remote-metropolitan).

Key recommendations include:

- We recommend the College develop a training focus that prepares young people for work that is connected to employers and employment opportunities based in the region.
- We recommend the College establish a curriculum leadership working group to develop culturally responsive pedagogies which include Pitjantjatjara language instruction and assessment, contextually relevant curriculum resources and a community engagement

strategy to embed learning on country, intergenerational engagement and bush trips within a broader strategy.

- We recommend the College develop a strategy for working directly with families to support student learning and future-focussed planning.
- We recommend the College develop a community engagement strategy that includes community organisations, senior community figures and forums for local community decision making and actions.
- We recommend the College develop a policy for engaging with boarding programs.
- We recommend the College implement a workforce development strategy that covers the core elements of the school plan.

Background

Nyangatjatjara College is an Independent Aboriginal School that provides secondary education for young people from the communities of Imanpa, Mutitjulu and Docker River as well as primary schooling at Docker River since the Northern Territory (NT) Government handed the Docker River Primary School to the College in July 2015. These communities are based in the southern region of the Northern Territory and span a distance of some 500 km between campuses. The main language is Pitjantjatjara, although there are strong language connections to Ngaanyatjarra, Ngaatjatjarra, Yankunytjatjara, Luritja, Western Aranda and Pertame (Southern Arrernte) across the region known as the tristate area.

Funding is predominantly provided by the Commonwealth along with other sources such as the Northern Territory Government and other grants, including project based funding provided through the Association for Independent Schools of the Northern Territory (AISNT). The administrative centre of the College is based at Yulara, a resort town situated near Uluru. The College offers classes in the three home communities, and Mutitjulu students are bussed in daily to the Yulara campus. Boarding facilities are utilised for semi-residential programs such as training intensives and special events. This research project builds on the work of three previous reports conducted in 2011, 2012, and 2015.

The College is governed by the board of the Nyangatjatjara Aboriginal Corporation (NAC) comprising 2 member directors from each of the three communities, and three independent directors (education, finance and governance). This study was commissioned by the NAC board and is intended to inform strategic planning processes for the NAC board and College staff, as well as contribute to the field of remote education research.

Introduction

Nyangatjatjara College was founded in 1997 by the three communities of Mutitjulu, Imanpa, and Docker River, along with their supporters to ensure that students would not need to leave the community to access schooling in their secondary years. Since that time, the College has had somewhat of a rollercoaster ride as they established a local/regional boarding model, struggled to maintain staff and programs, were placed under administration in 2006, and came close to closing in 2010. Student and staff numbers have steadily grown from then and in 2015, NAC took on management of the Docker River Primary School from the Northern Territory Government. In 2015 the NAC board identified the need to engage community members, directors, students and staff in a process of documenting community aspirations for young people, education and the future to inform strategic planning given the significant growth and changes that have occurred within the College in recent years.

This work began in early 2016 but was paused for the remainder of the year due to instability within the board. In 2017 the work was able to resume following resolution of these issues. A presentation was made to the NAC board in November, 2017. This report completes this stage of the work with a commissioned art piece and international presentation due to take place in 2018. This report locates the research within relevant literatures and policy discourse provides recommendations for actions that are responsive to the voices and aspirations of students, families, staff and Directors of the College community.

A brief community and College history

Nyangatjatjara College is located in very remote (ABS, 2011) Central Australia in the south west region of Northern Territory. The three communities of Docker River, Mutitjulu and Imanpa have histories, geographies and experiences of interactions with colonialism that are distinct, not only from other Australian communities, but also from each other (Osborne, 2015, 2016b). They constitute a College campus spanning 450 kms where community based schooling has been in place for 40 years or less in these locations. Docker River was established following a period of relative distance from colonialism and access to rations being provided at Areyonga from 1943, Mutitjulu grew around an emerging tourism industry and Imanpa community has its historical ties to the pastoralism industry with nearby stations such as Angas Downs, Erldunda, Mt Ebenezer and Henbury.

Nationally, accurate population figures are difficult to obtain in very remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities due to population mobility, language differences and issues with local access to online services. Australian Bureau of Statistics figures (ABS, 2016) list local community populations at 323 (Mutitjulu), 155 (Imanpa), and 394 (Docker River/Kaltukatjara). These 'state suburb' category figures are also problematic as they include non-Indigenous residents who are in the community during the census period for work which means non-local service providers are included as well as areas such as 'Rangerville', an enclave of housing provided at the outskirts of Mutitjulu community for rangers working at Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park. To get a more accurate indication of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents, the 'Indigenous Locations' search category (ILOC) looks more specifically at Indigenous residents in Indigenous communities. These figures show: Mutitjulu - 399, Imanpa - 137, and Docker River – 290. Although these are the most recent figures, they are problematic for two reasons: Firstly, ILOC data incorporates Yulara based Indigenous residents within Mutitjulu data, made apparent by the Torres Strait Islander cohort of the population and the high proportion of residents who have listed their industry of employment as 'Accommodation' (93), and 'café/restaurant' (9), among other industries not accessed by Mutitjulu residents. In 2017, the number of people living at Imanpa reduced significantly due to a range of factors resulting in current population numbers dropping below figures recorded in 2016 by the ABS.

This means that for the purposes of estimating the number of local Aboriginal residents of the three communities, a 'best guess' method is needed, accounting for all of these factors. We suggest that Docker River has around 300 Aboriginal people currently residing there, the Imanpa figures are likely to have dipped below 100 by the close of 2017, and Mutitjulu is likely to have between 200 and 225 local Aboriginal residents.

Student enrolment figures have remained generally consistent with the addition of the Docker River Primary School Campus in 2015 growing the overall enrolment numbers.

Campus	2013	2014	2015	2016

Yulara (Mutitjulu)	31	33	30	30
Imanpa	9	9	12	10
Docker River secondary	42	42	40	40
Docker River primary	-	-	50	50
Totals	82	84	132	130

Table 1: Student enrolment figures by campus and year. Source: College publications provided by Christine Godden

According to Myschools (a publicly accessible database – myschool.edu.au), the College has an ICSEA (Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage) score of 646 where 1000 is the average score for Australian schools. Further background on how this is calculated and implications for remote schooling is discussed further by Osborne and colleagues (Osborne, Benveniste, Rigney, Disbray, & Guenther, in press). Myschools data (based on semester 1 figures) shows that student attendance fluctuates significantly from year to year and that overall, attendance rates remain well below very remote schools attendance rates nationally. To some degree, this is to be expected given the weighting of secondary students in the overall student cohort where secondary student attendance is well below that of primary school student attendance. Further, very few remote schools provide secondary education, particularly to the senior years and so some disparity could be expected.

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017
Attendance rate (semester 1)	47%	57%	43%	54%

Table 2: Student semester 1 attendance figures (all campuses). Source: myschool.edu.au

Docker River (Kaltukatjara)

Docker River, located in the Petermann Ranges is the largest of the three communities with a population of some 400 or more people. Following almost an entire decade of drought in the 1930s, concerns about the condition of Petermann Range people were raised by Dr Charles Duguid (Duguid, 1963, 1972). In 1940 Duguid undertook an exploratory trip with T.G.H Strehlow (Hill, 2003; Strehlow, 1965) to assess the viability of a Petermann Range mission. An alternative plan was enacted and that was to establish a rations outpost of the Western Aranda Hermannsburg Mission at Areyonga, more than 250 kms to the north east of the Petermann Ranges but only 30 kms from Hermannsburg (now known as Ntaria). As Rowse (2002) suggests, this decision could also have been located within a broader government policy strategy to keep 'bush Myalls' at arms' length and to slow the potential of large-scale migration into Alice Springs. Many Anangu from Docker River attended school at Areyonga and Hermannsburg in the 1940s through to the 1960s and have closely interacted and intermarried with Western Aranda families through this arrangement. This connection remains strong, as well as in other communities such as Mutitjulu where families relocated later into the decentralisation period following the 1967 referendum (Edwards, 1992; Osborne, 2015). According to sketchy remnants of historical records about remote schools in the region, Docker River community and a government run primary school were established in 1968 soon after the 1967 referendum which enabled Aboriginal communities to be resourced by the Commonwealth government and become incorporated communities in their own right. The Docker River School was initially run from a 'silver bullet' caravan, a common arrangement in the early years of remote education in the Northern Territory.

Mutitjulu

Mutitjulu Community was established around the time of land rights and the hand back of Uluru Kata Tjuṯa in 1985 and is a population of more than 200. These striking geographical landforms are situated in relatively flat and sandy country, limiting the size and duration of stay for Anangu populations due to limited long-term water supplies. This region was accessed largely by foot, camel or horse until after 1945 where the end of the Second World War made a number of low or no cost heavy vehicles available to station owners, enabling the forging of roads. This in turn enabled the commencement of relatively humble tourist runs from Alice Springs on the Sundowner bus, although Angas Downs Station was the resourcing centre for the tourist runs where Anangu worked in a bakery, laundry and other roles, as well as carving wooden artefacts (puṉu) for sale to tourists stopping at the station (Osborne, 2016b). In 1957, Bill Harney was appointed as an administrator for the burgeoning area of Ayers Rock and senior Anangu such as Windlass and Tony Tjamiwa made regular visits and short terms stays at the fringe of the emerging settlement, forging a bush track through the spinifex from Ernabella. The current community area was established as a rudimentary campsite for tourists and caught national attention when baby Azaria Chamberlain was taken by a wild dog in 1980. According to Altman (1987), a hybrid community of tourists and Anangu including small businesses managed and owned provided by the Docker River community emerged from around 1972 (p. 87). These business provided services to tourists and Anangu at the current Mutitjulu community location until around 1984 as the Yulara resort went into construction (1982-1984) causing the service provision model to separate. Altman (1987) states that the Uluru Community was incorporated in 1975 but renamed and re-incorporated as Mutitjulu Community in 1978 following the death of a senior local Elder, Paddy Uluru (p. 87). Following the handback of Uluru Kata Tjuṯa in 1985, the planned closure of Mutitjulu Community to tourists was finalised in 1986. It is difficult to ascertain through publically available information, but it appears that schooling was available from around 1984 for children at Mutitjulu Community, although this is uncertain. The businesses established in Mutitjulu from around 1972 under Pitjantjatjara names (Malpa, Walpanya), governed and managed by the Docker River Social Club (Altman, 1987) are likely to have been early forerunners to the conceptual framework for establishing Nyangatjatjara Aboriginal Corporation, its subsidiary Wana Ungkunytja, and the many business that were established and have since closed within the corporation structure.

Imanpa

Imanpa Community grew out of a long history of Anangu engagement and community at the nearby Angas Downs Station, home of the Liddle family. As with all Anangu communities, the population varies greatly at different times. Currently the population of Imanpa is possibly below 100, although this has historically been much higher. Historically, the attitudes and practices of stations in relation to Anangu engagement and employment varied greatly from station to station and manager to manager (Duguid, 1963, 1972; Osborne, 2016b). Angas Downs was well-known for providing enterprise and employment opportunities, community services such as medical services, and an important site for respite and restocking when walking the established corridor between Ernabella Mission and Areyonga (Palmer, 2016). Stations did not offer schooling and children based at Areyonga walked to Areyonga to stay with relations and attend school during the school term (Osborne, 2016b, p. 121). Following the 1967 referendum many Anangu left Angas Downs and nearby stations to live at newly established communities, although some became ensconced at the nearby drinkers' camp near Mt Ebenezer. With stations required to pay wages to Aboriginal staff and welfare being made available at newly incorporated communities, the era of Aboriginal stockman in the marginal country of southern NT soon unravelled. Schooling was first made available locally in

the 1970s after a teacher was posted at the nearby Mt Ebenezer station but this was relocated by the early 1980s as Imanpa Community was established in its own right.

Nyangatjatjara College

Nyangatjatjara College was established in 1997 with an initial vision to provide locally based secondary education along with regional short term boarding opportunities. The College sits within a broader Aboriginal Corporation structure under the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC). The Nyangatjatjara Aboriginal Corporation (NAC) Board is made up of six member directors (two from each of the three communities) and currently there are three independent non-member directors with skills in education, finance and governance. The corporation has a rule book and must also comply with the relevant legislative Acts such as the Northern Territory and Australian Education Act, and the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act (CATSI). NAC is the sole member and shareholder of a subsidiary company, Wana Ungkunytja which has an independent board and operates under the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC). The College is funded largely by the Commonwealth Government on a per-capita funding basis with grants and other support provided from the NT Government and the Association for Independent Schools of the Northern Territory (AISNT).

The College was established with a view to provide alternatives to sending children long distances from home, family, culture and country to access secondary education, a policy that is continued today (Wilson, 2014). Foundation Imanpa Community Director of NAC Sandra Armstrong said it this way in her speech at the opening of the College in 1997:

> *We are … talking about getting a school here, in the middle, to overcome this aching for home. We think this is good and right. As our children get bigger and older they will have a school to go to. One that will be there for our children and our grandchildren's children.* (Armstrong, 1997)

After establishing three community based centres, the College began a program of semi-residential boarding at the central Yulara campus where groups of boys and girls rotated a term at a time. This approach had advantages but was also made difficult with high turnover of staff and school leadership and difficulties with management of the corporation with NAC being put into administration in 2006. By 2009-10, student numbers were low and a skeleton staff ran community based classes with some bureaucrats and College staff arguing for the College to close. In time, student and teacher numbers have grown and in 2015 the Northern Territory Government handed over management of the Docker River Primary School. In 2017, the College has around 120 students. The financial, governance and management positions of the College are strong and this study aims to assist future planning for education across the three communities.

Anangu families, communities and culture have experienced dramatic changes in a relatively short period of time through ongoing and changing interactions with colonialism and Western education (Osborne, 2016b). This study is important as it provides a venue for Anangu community members, educators, students and NAC Directors to shape the nature of a local community education approach within a rapidly changing social, cultural and global education landscape.

Literature review

Remote Aboriginal communities and education tend to be characterised in political and media narratives as behind (ABC, 2013; Martin, 2012, July 17; Wilson, 2014), or failed (Smee, 2013, December 13; The Scots College, 2015; Throwden, 2013, February 26) and in need of intervention (Martin, 2014, August 12, 2014, September 8). Current Commonwealth Government education policy focuses on 'Closing the Gap' (Turnbull, 2016, 2017) between Indigenous and non-Indigenous

Australian students on the measures of school attendance, literacy and numeracy benchmark test results (NAPLaN), year 12 completion rates and transition to employment. Following the Wilson review (2014) of Indigenous Education in the Northern Territory, policy and investment focus largely mirrored Commonwealth initiatives with a strong focus on student attendance, investment in Direct Instruction, a pedagogy focussed on basic skills in English language, and the establishment of new boarding facilities and support for students to attend boarding schools through Transition Support Units. These priorities were selected despite little evidence to support the logic of these interventions (Osborne et al., in press; Osborne, Lester, Minutjukur, & Tjitayi, 2014) or that these interventions have made significant improvements. Recently, the Northern Territory Government (NTG, 2017) has developed a new strategic framework and plan (2018-22) which broadens the focus of education policy and practice, including Indigenous Education, which places school leadership at the centre with community engagement, quality teaching, data and accountability, and differentiated support for schools as further areas of focus. The measures of success have also broadened to include perception data, staff retention and Aboriginal employment figures.

Indigenous scholars reject colonial representations of themselves and their communities including policy interventions such as 'Closing the Gap' that work from an assumption of deficit on dominant culture terms, as determined by governments and institutions (Bishop, 2011; Nakata, 2007; Sarra, 2011; Smith, 1999). This work resonates strongly with the work of Critical Race Theorists who argue that race, power, class and institutional norms set the conditions for unequal outcomes in Western education institutions (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Milner, 2008). Similarly, the Funds of Knowledge theoretical approach grew from articulating the experiences of Mexican American communities as minorities in American education. Significant work has been undertaken to move from a deficit mindset of minority students, their families and communities, and instead, identify the assets of family, culture, language and community, bringing them into the education process as a platform for strengthening education approaches and outcomes in diverse communities (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992; Zipin, 2013). In remote Aboriginal communities, the work of Yunupingu (Wearne & Yunupingu, 2011; Yunupingu, 1999) elevated the role and value of Aboriginal knowledges, languages and communities in education but the voices and narratives of remote Aboriginal educators and scholars have been largely silenced in the current framing of remote Aboriginal Education policy. In terms of Anangu communities and education, policy is informed by non-Anangu voices. There is an emerging archive of literatures featuring Anangu educators (Ellis & Dousset, 2016; Kral & Ellis, 2008; Minutjukur et al., 2014; Osborne et al., 2014; Tur, Blanch, & Wilson, 2010) but to date, these have not been dominant voices in shaping Anangu Education from a systemic or policy perspective.

The Remote Education Systems project (RES) within the Cooperative Research Centre for Remote Economic Participation (CRC-REP) sought to investigate the demands that remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities place on education. More than 70 publications are available online (crc-rep.com/remote-education-systems) and a project summary is also available (Guenther, Disbray, & Osborne, 2016). Since the completion of this project, a focus on boarding policies and outcomes for very remote Indigenous students has continued to grow (Benveniste, forthcoming; Benveniste, Guenther, Dawson, & Rainbird, 2016; Guenther et al., 2017; Mander, Cohen, & Pooley, 2015; Osborne et al., in press; Stewart, 2015). This research points to a lack of evidence informing policy and practice for remote boarding programs and suggests that a strategic, evidence based whole of system approach is needed (Guenther et al., 2017). A recent evaluation (KPMG, 2016) of the seven Independent School Indigenous boarding programs raised concerns about inadequate funding for sustainable programs. Since that time, two of the seven programs have closed, although one will re-open within a scaled back format.

This study examines community aspirations for young people in Anangu communities and how the College might better position an education approach to strengthen the possibility of these aspirations being realised. Nakata (2007) argues that 'imagined futures' are critical in forming what Zipin et al term 'emergent aspirations' (p. 239), an idea supported and developed by Rueben Burton in reflecting on his work as an Anangu educator at Amata Anangu School in South Australia (Burton & Osborne, 2014).

Drawing on a Funds of Knowledge theoretical approach, Zipin et al. (Zipin, Sellar, Brennan, & Gale, 2015) examine the impacts of significant structural changes to global economies on regional and marginal communities in Victoria. They argue that

> ...discursive incitements to overcome obstacles through 'raising aspirations' actually increase rather than attenuate obstacles by operating ideologically to simplify the complexities and mute the severities of historic conditions in which young people in underclass and working– middle-class positions struggle to imagine and pursue futures. (p. 228)

This requires a twofold response where educators and policy makers must first work towards

> ...a complex understanding of how aspirations are constituted by multiple social–cultural resources, including policy and populist ideologics but also family and community histories and the lived-cultural agency of people in the present. (p. 228)

And secondly, drawing on the work of Appadurai (2004), we are urged to consider the 'resourcing and capacitating required for emergent aspirations to be brought into effective expression and agentic mobilization towards alternative futures' (p. 239).

A Funds of Knowledge theoretical approach underpins the approach for this study where we work to investigate community-based 'funds of aspiration' (Zipin et al., 2015, p. 236) and then consider the implications for 'resourcing and capacitating' alternative future possibilities across social, cultural, economic and educational spaces.

Methodology

Timeline and process

Nyangatjatjara College and the NAC board commissioned this study in late 2015 requesting that the research team investigate community and student aspirations and how the College can best respond. They requested that we interview community members, local and non-local staff, NAC Directors and students who have returned from boarding schools. The project agreement was with Ninti One Limited, a research organisation based out of Alice Springs (www.nintione.com.au). Coordinating researchers Dr John Guenther (Batchelor Institute for Indigenous Tertiary Education – BIITE) and Dr Sam Osborne (University of South Australia – UniSA) brought together a team of Anangu and bilingual researchers to work on the project, including Lorraine King, Karina Lester, Sandra Ken and Rose Lester. An ethics application was lodged with UniSA and approval was issued on June 7th, 2016 [*0000035092: Centring Anangu voices in Anangu education: Reshaping education practice for the future?*]

The research team met together as part of the research design process and at other times for data collection, data analysis and presentation of the data. In 2016, regular board discussions were held and an initial workshop was held in Docker River with Anangu Education Workers (AEWs). In July 2016 a decision was made to suspend data collection due to instability within the NAC board. By

June 2017 this situation was resolved and the fieldwork recommenced. This process included a series of visits to all three communities with individual and small group interviews, and workshops with the NAC board as well as a final workshop involving more than 20 NAC directors, community members, College staff, researchers and invited guests. This final workshop allowed participants to work in small focus groups to interact with emerging themes and data from the research.

Three presentations were made in November 2017: Firstly, John Guenther and Lorraine King presented the research findings with a particular focus on implications for boarding school policy at an Independent Schools of the Northern Territory meeting (November 9th, Alice Springs). On the same day, researchers Karina Lester and Sam Osborne presented a lecture on the role of Aboriginal languages in research and education at Melbourne University at the invitation of the Research Unit for Indigenous Language (RUIL). This lecture incorporated aspects of the Centring Anangu Voices research findings. Finally, on November 12, a brief presentation was made to a joint meeting of the boards of NAC and Wana Ungkunytja (WU) in Yulara, followed by a fuller report at Imanpa on November 13th to the NAC board and members of the Imanpa School and community.

In 2018, an international presentation of the research is planned along with the NAC board commissioning an art piece incorporating senior artists from the three communities. This work will summarise the findings of the research and will be displayed in the front office of the College. It could also be produced as a banner for display at events and presentations.

Language and methodology

Indigenous scholars explain that narrative is important for sharing Indigenous knowledge and experiences (Arbon, 2008; Ford, 2005; Nakata, 2007; Smith, 1999). This is reflected in the development of the three studies conducted between 2011 and 2015 (Ninti One, 2012, 2013, 2016) as standard school survey tools and methodologies for gaining parent and community feedback proved to be somewhat limited in getting at any truth in relation to student and community experiences and aspirations. The 2011 surveys were largely based on the mainstream survey tools used nationally and tended to illicit responses within a socio-cultural frame that Liberman (1980) terms 'gratuitous concurrence'. This involves a process of mirroring assumptions and attempting to agree with a questioner as a cultural practice for affirming relationships and avoiding potential conflict in Indigenous cultures. The problem with this approach is that research outcomes end up mirroring the values and assumptions that were applied to framing the questions and lack depth for informing future planning and actions (Osborne, 2017). With this in mind, the research team worked carefully to frame two questions for open discussion and to allow participants to speak in their language of choice. This meant developing the questions in two languages and leaving open spaces for participants to share stories uninterrupted and without channelling towards a predetermined line of questions wherever possible. All participants signed forms giving prior informed consent and interviews were recorded. Most interviews were held in Pitjantjatjara language and a transliteration (English language summary of the text) was produced for each of these interviews. Where interviews were in English, transcripts were also produced.

The two questions were:

1. What does a successful young person look like in Anangu communities? *Yangupala kunpu munu ninti nyaa nguwanpa ngaranyi?*
2. How can the College strengthen these possibilities? *Yaaltji-Yaaltjingku College-ingku alpamilara pakaltjingani yangupala kunpu munu ninti tjuta?*

The process of working between Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara and English was to frame the questions was painstaking and demonstrates the need for highly skilled researchers in a dual language, dual epistemological context. For example, the notion of 'success', while complex and contested in English language contexts, makes little sense in Pitjantjatjara language and communities. Many of the early workshops were devoted simply to the process of defining success and a successful young person. In English, the Pitjantjatjara language version of the questions ask:

1. What is a strong and smart/clever/knowledgeable young person like?
2. How can the College help raise up strong and knowledgeable young people?

Even before the interviews began, a negotiation of language, meaning, context and culture was required. Working as a research team with a range of skills and experiences in languages and research allowed for rich conversations to occur in positioning the work.

In workshop sessions, bilingual members of the research team acted as facilitators and scribes to allow conversations to generate momentum and ensure that conversations were documented in participants' language of choice.

Research participants

The number of participants for the data collection phase was 65 covering the following roles:

Participant type	Number
Teachers/non-local staff	14
Anangu Education Workers (AEWs)	12
Community members	21
Students returned from boarding	10
Directors	8

Table 3: Participant type and number

A breakdown of community representation of participants is as follows:

Participants' home community	Number
Docker River	24
Imanpa	9
Mutitjulu	15
Non-local	17

Table 4: Participants' home community

Students interviewed are from the following communities:

Student participants' home community	Number
Docker River	3
Imanpa	3
Mutitjulu	4

Table 5: Student participants' home community

At the completion of interviews, the research team analysed the data and began to frame community narratives into five key areas. A visual model was developed to focus discussion groups

at a final workshop held at Yulara on September 17th, 2017. The model shows the intention of the two questions in defining a strong young person and articulating the role and relationship of the College in achieving this outcome. Five key themes are included as nodes, or pathways to strengthening and enabling this relationship. The five key themes were: training and work, family, teachers and teaching, community, and boarding.
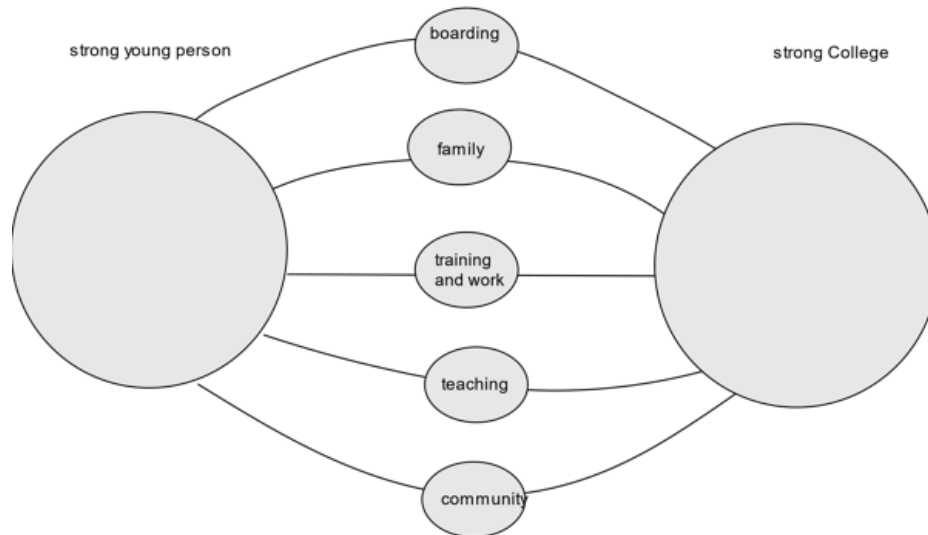

Figure 1: Visual model depicting five themes participants discussed as important for the College in strengthening young people

From this report, the process of sharing and discussing the findings will continue into next year. College leadership and the NAC board will use the research report to inform strategic planning and community engagement. The research also contributes to the literatures and the field of remote education research.

Findings

The first question for the study, 'What does a successful young person look like?' drew a range of responses. As discussed above, in Pitjantjatjara language, the question asked what a strong and smart/knowledgeable young person looks like. This was followed by the question, 'How can the College enable these possibilities'? Analysis of the data found that there were five main themes that responses to question 2 tended to relate to. These include: training and work, teachers and teaching, family, community, and boarding. Boarding was the only theme that we were specifically asked to talk to students and families about. The findings relating to question 2 have been organised under these headings.

What does a successful young person look like in Aṉangu communities?

Responses to this question were coded under themes. In order of frequency, these themes included: work, strong in English and Pitjantjatjara language, confidence/identity/belonging, cultural knowledge, looking after family, happy and healthy, looking after country and community, life skills, keep on learning/certificates/training, strong/good thinking, and respect. There were many minor themes not listed here that had few responses. In relation to boarding, some families and students shared hopes of what they felt their time in boarding might achieve but in all cases, these ideas about success and successful young people shifted on return to the community. This is a complex and nuanced discussion that will be expanded on under the boarding theme below.

The most common focus was the importance of having a job. This was not expressed in terms of mainstream success narratives citing school completion as a pathway to university and careers but more in terms of establishing a commitment to learning, growing and taking responsibility within the context of family and community. These were expressed succinctly in some examples:

- *Young women/men who are married should still be working*
- *Gets work*
- *A worker*
- *Get a job and stay in community*
- *Hard worker*
- *Get certificates and get a job*
- *Can read and write, is confident and can talk to anyone*
- *Can talk to whitefellas.*
- *Getting work experience, making them feel good and strong. Can talk about their community*
- *Maybe get good job later*
- *At boarding school, the teachers talked about success like finishing homework and playing sports*

Some participants provided background explanation on their thinking about the importance of work as a part of success:

- *I work and care for my family because they are our future. My son is grown up. He's got a job and a wife and family and his own house and works and looks after his own family. It's good for kids to know Anangu way and white fella way. When people see that they know the two ways they say he's clever.*

- *I talk to [my kids] about how I had a job and then after I had them I kept working so I've got money for my kids. So they have a future. I tell them they are growing up and won't always be little and their time will come to look after themselves and family. I give them ideas about what they could do when older.*

This parent focussed on other aspects of a young person:

- *We want them to be confident and learn resilience*

In one community workshop, narratives tended towards what might be described as character strengths or virtues that define a 'successful' young person. Responses included:

  - *Helping grandparents to communicate in English*
  - *Speak to [younger] children to learn and listen*
  - *Happy*
  - *Honest*
  - *Living 'good ways' [wiṟuṟa nyinanyi], choosing good things*
  - *Working*
  - *Strong teacher [of younger children]*
  - *Know about work, culture, history and dreaming*
  - *Helping other kids to listen and listen to teachers*
  - *Strong*
  - *Good thinking [kulintja wiṟu]*

The concept of 'living good ways' and 'good thinking' are simplistic in their English language translations and are poor representatives of the corresponding Pitjantjatjara language concepts which point to deeper notions of virtues, life choices, and optimistic and hopeful mindsets. These are deeply engrained cultural values within a Pitjantjatjara language and epistemological frame and

deserve further work to come to terms with what these virtues represent in practice and consider what the conditions are for modelling such values and consider how young people might practically demonstrate these virtues. They are not easily translatable into English.

Another concept that was described by community members and parents as the notion of being strong in two worlds:

- *understand about country and white fella way as well*
- *strong in both ways*
- *Two-ways learning (Anangu way and Piranpa way)*
- *Experience in both cultures/walking in two worlds*
- *Confident in both cultures, in our culture*
- *Connecting to the wider world and to family and culture*
- *Having a good balance: Anangu and whitefella stuff and make sure they've got their culture learning*
- *Two way - whitefella way, Anangu way. They're in the middle*

A community women's focus group provided the following summations of a successful young person in response to the Pitjantjatjara cues of kunpu (strong) and ninti (smart, knowledgeable, educated):

- *Kunpu (strong): wears good clean clothes, strong family, knows two ways, strong tjukurpa, culture. Knows their identity, know family. Spend their money wisely, good food. Healthy (all of these feed into: strong spirit – kurunpa kunpu).*
- *Ninti (smart/clever/educated/knowledgeable): katangku kulini palya nyinanytja (Thinking about living good way). Helpful, learns with others, works together with others, looks after country, goes hunting with friends and family. Teaching others: dancing, younger girls. School camps, camps on holidays. Working, job, training. Exercises – walking*

These narratives reinforce consistent messages throughout the data about the role of culture, identity and community as well as a range of practical and philosophical ideas about what a successful young person looks like.

The importance of role modelling in encouraging young people to achieve these aspirations was also a focus:

- *When someone is working well it's good to sit down with them and talk about what they do and maybe to work alongside him and learn from them. Sometimes we talk to the kids about a strong person in community and call them over and invite them to do something together. Encourage them to ask that person about how they do things and watch and learn. Sometimes in town they are just wandering around with nothing to do. But in community there is always something they can do and people they can learn from.*

In summary, community narratives suggest a successful young person in Anangu communities is confident in their sense of identity and belonging, is engaged in cultural responsibilities such as looking after country and others, keeps learning, has a job and is strong in two worlds. They choose positive thinking and are respectful. This leads us to the second question:

How can education strengthen these possibilities?

As described above, response to this question were collated under five themes: Training and work, family, teachers and teaching, community, and boarding.

Training and Work

From 2011-2016 the College commissioned a series of three community surveys (Ninti One, 2012, 2013; Osborne, 2016a) documenting community aspirations and feedback on the work of the College. Across this six-year period, narratives about the importance of work and what opportunities might be available grew to some extent, however data collected for this study shows a significant increase in focus on the importance of training and work both during and post-school years. Student and community narratives were also far more specific in terms of the kinds of work young people could or should be doing than in previous years. This is a significant shift and provides the College with a clear focus on the purpose of schooling and programs for the years ahead.

There is discussion in the literatures about the importance of 'imagined futures' (Nakata, 2007) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in positioning themselves for the future. The 'Can't be what you can't see' literature review examining potential pathways into university for Indigenous students, works from a similar belief - that potential pathways for young people in remote communities need to be seen if they are to be aspired to and pursued (Wilks & Wilson, 2014). In previous College surveys, student and community surveys suggested a limited scope of available options for work in the community where community responses focussed on working in the school, rangers, community store, and work for the dole programs among a handful of other suggestions spoken with an air of resignation, suggesting that it was not expected that these jobs were realistically going to materialise. In this series of interviews, participants clearly outlined a suite of employment opportunities and spoke with a sense of expectancy, often going further to explain what is needed to strengthen transitions and employee retention in these positions. Suggested jobs (in order of frequency) include: land management, airport, ranger, aged care, child care, dancing at Yulara, clinic, grading roads, computing and office administration, tour guiding, planting trees, resort, with a further 9 jobs listed.

- *There are no A̲nangu working at the airport. This would be a good job for our young people*
- *Some people are complaining the roads are in disrepair but grading the roads is great work for A̲nangu*
- *[The College should be] supporting young people to be work ready when they finish school to get work like ranger, airport or resort. Both sides learning at the same time.*

Surprisingly, some of the jobs rarely suggested include store, school, clinic, and work for the dole programs – all jobs that featured strongly in suggestions from previous surveys. The language and imagining has demonstrably shifted. Some roles suggested as 'work' included hunting, governance, painting at the cultural centre and a need to map employment opportunities and pathways, joining the dots between school-based training and work experiences, post school training and ultimately, employment was articulated:

- *We need to map where the jobs are and what young people want to do – and then help them get the job*
- *Like an audit – how many jobs and what are they? Nurse/health, IPA/ranger, mechanic, community store, Aged care: washing, food, care…*

A strong theme throughout interviews was the importance of cultural knowledge, connection to the land and language and the primacy of intergenerational engagement in A̲nangu communities. These ideas also pushed through to the potential for enterprise, employment and economic development for A̲nangu:

- *The college could make their own tour here. Bring tourists to the college and show the maku (withchetty grubs), tjala (honey ants), mingkulpa (native tobacco), plants and bush medicines etc. The college could generate funds through a tourism program and the kids are working and learning. It*

- *could be a long term/continuing tourism project but rotating the tour teams between the three communities with training and work.*
- *My son and others sometimes dance at Yulara for the tourists. They learned the dance from their grandfather*
- *They can talk about their culture to visitors, tourists, like tour guiding. Confident, that's what I'd like to see. No one feeling shame. This is our country and we've got to lead the way in our own communities. When we get older they've got to look after this place too*
- *Maybe Anangu will pass away and they can take over then*

A Director explained the value that cultural expertise and life experience on the land potentially offers in the workplace:

- *To be a ranger, you need to know how to track and recognise the different animals and know which directions they went. Sometimes whitefellas come and they don't know much at all. They just know about how to work with computers. We teach them for years sometimes. Often they have to go back to see their families [for some years] and then return. Even though I'm a grandfather now, they still invite me to come to meetings. I go on panels to select new workers and ask them questions like 'where have you worked before'? 'Have you worked with Anangu'? Some people such as those from Warburton Ranges went to college and learned lots of English. But we just learned Pitjantjatjara, not English. We learned to speak English on the station. My schoolteacher was the station, branding, mustering.*

Other comments focussed on the role of family and other dynamics that are connected to work:

- *Be strong together and be humble and support each other to work*
- *Support your husband/wife to work: emotional and/or practical support back home for them to work, like cleaning, looking after the house and other things.*
- *I have young people in my family who are very young and they are married. Maybe they can take tourists out but they need a license. Maybe they could work with [a family member] at [the homeland]*

There was an awareness of existing training programs such as the girls' certificate in child care training and the Cairns Rural Operations training for young fellas:

- *[The College] should keep them training like in Cairns keep going on that stuff. They should use what they have learned like fencing, welding. Possibly they could build a fence around the playground at Mutitjulu or other projects to practice what they learnt.*
- *Young watis [men] – keep them training, finding out about what work is*

A semi-residential model was advocated in relation to boarding alternatives but also in terms of short term training opportunities:

- *They could do short training courses of one or two weeks at a time and then return. They could take turns for each of the three communities to host the training.*

There is sometimes an assumption that there are no jobs in communities and that young people must leave in order to find a job. This notion is not supported by some researchers (Guenther & Boyle, 2013), and comments made by students, community and directors made it clear that hopes for attaining work are 'red dirt aspirations', that is, situated in the context of community:

- *Young people don't want to work at the resort or in cities. They want to work in their own communities because they get too homesick living away from home. They could do short training courses of one or two weeks at a time and then return.*

- *They need to learn about their own country so they can look after it and they won't leave.*

This was largely supported by students but some comments suggested a preparedness to live and work outside of the community:

- *I'd like to find work in Mutitjulu. Probably in Childcare*
- *I wanted to come back here [to the community] and work*
- *I was thinking of finishing school and getting a job in mining in Groote Island. Now I'm thinking of doing ranger work and work here. I did a course in Cairns and I got a certificate 3 that will get me a job anywhere. Just show the certificate*
- *Now I've got the certificate from Cairns I'm thinking of finishing school this year and doing ranger work. We learnt about growing plants, working on chainsaws and mechanical stuff.*
- *I'm thinking of going to Cairns and getting my certificate and finish school and getting a job here maybe working with dad. Not sure what.*
- *I want to work in my own community but sometimes go for meetings.*
- *I could work in Alice Springs*

Participants also explained some of the difficulties in securing jobs in the community and that the College could be assisting young people with the practical and administrative elements of preparing for work:

- *The College should prepare them for work. Mechanics, building houses etc. They should be able to go into jobs when they leave school. The kids are missing out here. They learn lots and then when they leave they can't get jobs. They need ID, police check, Ochre card.*
- *In Cairns they learn about driving. They should continue in school to year 12. While at school, they should learn to drive and get their license.*

Directors described the ongoing process of learning through work and further training and the important role that family, community, Piṟanpa peers and managers play in ensuring this happens:

- *We need to teach them by continually talking. But if they start taking drugs they will get side-tracked and lost. This stops them from working. They need to keep climbing like a ladder, keep learning new things (step by step) and after that he will be really knowledgeable and get the good important jobs.*
- *Sometimes Piṟanpa are in the jobs and Aṉangu leave discouraged because the Piṟanpa are arguing about who is the boss and telling them to do this and that but not teaching them properly. That's why lots of rangers have stopped working.*

This mentoring responsibility extends to other aspects of community life:

- *Encourage them to be a leader to look after the community.*
- *Young people should be invited to the meetings to listen, look and learn. We could invite one from each community.*
- *Bringing young people to board meetings to let young people learn about board work*

In summary, training and work was by far the most significant priority that participants identified for the College in supporting young people for the future. Other themes identified below also layer into the training and work category. For example, some participants discussed how families can support young people to have a job.

Family

Participants discussed the importance of family in supporting and growing successful young people both in terms of the role family plays and in how the College can support and work with families. Participants suggested that the College could:

- *Establish a parent support group*
- *Have a stronger focus on parent engagement*
- *Build relationships and trust*
- *Help families*
- *Employ an Aboriginal Liaison Officer to be based at the College and work between the school and families*
- *Focus on networking: engaging, building relationships*

Some suggestions about the role that families should play include:

- *Kids succeed when they have strong families pushing them to come to school*
- *Parents assisting students*
- *Families meeting to tell kids to stay at school (come to college from community)*
- *Happy families support students to do well*
- *Families and the college can talk together about ways to keep kids out of the sun, like after school activities*
- *Helping kids stop teasing*
- *Parents can take the young people out and teach them about the bush*
- *Parents and community should also be supporting the college by talking to their kids and telling them to listen to the teachers and AEWs. They can't just leave the college to do everything.*
- *Parents can ask questions to get them thinking about future.*

Some comments also included suggestions for successful young people contributing to family life:

- *Cleaning the house, helping with cooking*
- *Helpful, helping others learn and going hunting with family*
- *Helping the grandparents to communicate in English*
- *Successful young people work to support their family*

There are important family elements of family interaction that are featured under headings such as community and boarding, but these also highlight the importance of intergenerational engagement and the critical role that families play in supporting young people to gain access and have a positive experience within boarding. These parents explained their role in encouraging and building aspiration within her children:

- *I tell them they are growing up and won't always be little and their time will come to look after themselves and family. I give them ideas about what they could do when older.*
- *They'll feel better about themselves, [their] wellbeing... that's where it starts back at home. When they go to school, they can be told by one of the Elders or their mum and dad, "When you're at school you're there to learn, you respect your teacher. You're there to listen and learn. At recess and lunchtime, that's your time you can play around but not in the classroom. You're there to learn."*

The role of family is central to strengthening identity and belonging and creating a foundation for young people to be confident in themselves and their place in the world. This definition of family extends beyond parents and a Western view of nuclear family. This comment explains the importance of family in strengthening young people and the negative impact an absence of strong family support can have on young people and their wellbeing:

- *They learn to be confident in family. We can see from their faces when the get home from school if they are not happy and we sit them down and talk about it. And then they feel better. Other kids sometimes don't talk about their worries and they start wandering around and don't come to talk over with family.*
- *They are missing out on their grandparents and uncles taking them out to learn. This will teach them how to look after their family by hunting. In many communities education is falling down and the kids have lots of worries.*

Participant feedback suggests that the College can suggest how they can practically and structurally engage parents in day to day activities, and consider the importance of family in supporting young people in school as well as education that occurs outside of school. There is a view that successful young people contribute to the family and take care of younger and older family members. This is a message that can be encouraged and reinforced through the work of the school, in partnership with family and community members.

Teachers and teaching

Participant feedback tended to focus on the visible aspects of schooling that relates to their experience. The general absence of feedback about classroom based pedagogy is to be expected unless parents are actively involved in the classroom. In the case of Anangu educators, comments tended to be limited in providing feedback about the role of classroom pedagogies and their role within the classroom:

- *I tell the kids to listen to the teacher*
- *The students make play dough with flour and colors and then make footprints in the dough. Then they do them on the canvas.*
- *The students are involved in painting.*
- *The teachers want to learn Pitjantjatjara so they can communicate better*
- *I'd like to see the students working more often in separate groups; boys and girls separate*

This could be partly because the questions related to the College more broadly rather than asking specifically about classroom practice, but could also be an indication that there is scope for Anangu educators to be more actively involved within the classroom and processes such as planning, teaching and reflection. One parent shared hopes that education would provide opportunities similar to schools elsewhere and went on to suggest that teacher retention is linked to quality teaching and strengthening education opportunities:

- *We want them to have the same opportunities to learn in the communities, as they would have in the city. The teachers come for a short time then leave and the kids miss out. The teachers come on short contracts then leave and a new one comes and has to start over. We want the teachers to stay and teach properly.*
- *We want them strong in reading and writing*

School completion was also raised a number of times with some specifically citing year 12 completion as an expectation:

- *They should continue in school to year 12*
- *We were able to still go to school with our kids at Batchelor. We want our kids to be able to keep going to school even if they have a baby.*

One parent shared a frustration, arguing that the school program needs to be more engaging to encourage students to stay at school:

- *I ask the kids how they went at school each day. Sometimes they get bored and then they leave. I talk to them about this. Sometimes they have nothing to do. It's good for them to play outside - sometimes they need to have activities and be kept busy.*

The theme of learning outside of the classroom was regularly raised in terms of bush trips and camps, but also in terms of school trips outside of community as a tool for making school more engaging:

- *They need to be giving chances to go and do trips and do things other than just sitting down [in the classroom] all the time.*

Some parents and students suggested that classroom based learning needs to be more rigorous, particularly for students who have returned from boarding programs:

- *The teachers have noticed that my kids are clever and confident to speak up They talk about their good ideas confidently without shame [since they returned from boarding]. So I'm happy about that but a bit worried that they are forgetting the things they learnt there [at boarding].*
- *They did well but got homesick and came back went back to college. They learned better English while away. I'd like him to go back.*
- *When I came back from boarding, the work was too easy. The teachers were trying to be friends with the kids instead of pushing us hard to learn hard things.*
- *The kids treat the teachers more like mates than teachers - they're like their buddies. They are their teachers but they are their mates and there comes a time in the classroom where they shouldn't treat them like a buddy but like a teacher. There's a bit of a breakdown there sometimes. At that time they're there to listen and learn.*
- *The work is too easy here*
- *We want to learn properly*

The theme of strengthening students as emerging leaders was also strong in community narratives:

- *The College can encourage them to be a leader to look after the community*
- *Leadership: student committee, parent committee*

A preference for separate classes by gender and age group in the senior years was raised a number of times across individual interviews and group workshops. One parent spoke strongly on this issue:

- *All the young watis [men] should be in a separate class away from the others. They can't work with those others that are mucking up. They don't want to be learning with the little kids.*

One parent spoke highly of the training programs their son has been involved in but would like to see this expanded:

- *What other training can the College deliver, like for girls – so they can get ready for work?*

A number of comments relating to the College teaching program related to semi-residential training with a focus on life skills and preparation for work:

- *This community needs health workers and all the old people getting older and it's up the young people to look after the community - that's what I'd like to see and more work experience at the College. They've got all those dorms there at the college. I'd like to see the kids go there stay at the College for a couple of days to get them away from the community for a little while and give the family a bit of a break too, and then they can focus a bit more. I don't see that happening much at the College*
- *The College could have all the girls first for a week and then they come back and then the boys go for their turn.*

- *They used to rotate boys and girls to stay at the College. I'd like to see that again; short stints and focused training. And that's when they could be doing work experience or something. They can be taught to do everything – cleaning, ironing…*

Many parents and students spoke positively about the opportunities the College presents as a local community schooling option on return from boarding:

- *Now that I'm back, I would like to read and write in Pitjantjatjara*
- *The College can help me look for jobs*
- *I'm looking forward to finishing the course in Cairns*
- *When they came back from [boarding school] it was a bit disappointing that it didn't work out but we were worried for them. They were safer back home and they had the College to come back to. Closer to home*

Teacher preparation for living and working in a both ways environment was also raised a number of times:

- *People in the college need to be experienced or be prepared to learn about Aṉangu culture*
- *When the kids go out bush for cultural learning the teachers need to be involved too so they can see and learn*

A workshop focus group mapped out some ideas about what a 'good teacher' looks like:

- *Works hard*
- *Understands cross-cultures*
- *Engaging – good people skills*
- *Fun – play around*
- *Good relationships: friendly, helpful, respectful, teach reading and writing, plan*

One student left no doubt as to the importance of student teacher relationships:

- *[College staff member] is the best thing that's ever happened to me. Without [them], I don't what I'd be doing.*

Community

The role of family and community in school was often raised as being important for supporting young people to focus and succeed. These parents advocate an active engagement akin to mentoring between senior community members and students:

- *The College can help young people by getting some senior strong men working with the young fellas - and senior ladies. Talking to them to see what they want to do. The young men and boys - see what they want and keep them focused. Try to get them to see the importance of school and for the girls too they need a strong senior woman there to support them and check up on them [asking] "How do you think you're going? You need to pick up on your maths" - that sort of stuff. Some people are slipping through, and missing out and not learning. They might need some one on one.*

Broadly, statements about the need for the College to engage with the community and community to engage with the College were woven throughout participant interviews and workshop responses:

- *Work together with community*
- *The College should support, encourage and respect the community*
- *I'd like to see the College and community meeting and planning together – decide what we will do [together]*

Throughout interviews, a recurring theme was the need for intergenerational engagement and for young people to be learning traditional skills, *Tjukurpa* [dreaming stories], about sites and looking after country and local language. To some degree, this is to be expected, but what was surprising was the frequency and detail of themes. The attention given to A<u>n</u>angu knowings and languages far outweighs the level of detail and the amount of time community members devoted to these themes in previous surveys. Participants saw this as crucial in the context of a wide range of benefits, include identity and belonging, building student engagement, mentoring, strengthening the future of A<u>n</u>angu communities, language and knowledges, among others.

- *A few years ago I went out with the men and young fellas. We went on a camping trip with a couple of men from the community. We all went out to the lakes and camped out for 2 nights looking for a rock hole there - we had to go find it again. They found it and cleaned it all out. We camped there next to the rock hole and went out to the lakes and camped one night. It was good to be with those young fellas and see the older blokes there with them. It would be good to talk to those young fellas and see what they got out of it. Have culture days like that every now and again. And they can do that for their school work too and use it as a school project*
- *All the girls go with the old women camping out for ceremony. They sit down and talk to the young girls. This is something the College can work with.*
- *They're doing all the whitefella stuff all the time. The College could have that bit of cultural stuff thrown into it.*
- *The young people need things to do: Youth centre, movies, football, OSCHC [Out of School Hours Care] programs. And they need to camp out. They are missing out on their grandparents and uncles taking them out to learn. This will teach them how to look after their family by hunting.*
- *They need to learn both ways: A<u>n</u>angu and Pi<u>r</u>anpa. They need to learn our language too. Take them out bush and teach about maku* [witchetty grubs]*, the birds and the names of the trees, "that's bush medicine, that's bush plum." Take them out bush for two nights and teach them - maybe on weekends.*
- *We need to teach them how to hunt and cook the meat; teach the girls how to get maku*
- *I'd like to see 2 or 3 day bush trips to learn hunting, animals, stories, sites, cooking meat in an intensive mode. They can learn properly this way.*
- *Community involvement can include: teach culture, take young people camping, looking after country, Tjukurpa, bush trips*
- *I'd like to see the students learning on country – bush food, medicine, cooking with wa<u>r</u>u (fire), animals, tracking*
- *First language is important: Tjukurpa (Dreaming plus history stories), looking for water plus stories of the old days. Write stories – make books in language. Mani-mani – wire story telling*

The strength of these narratives issues a mandate for the College to consider how they might structure language, knowledges, histories, community and intergenerational engagement (including mentoring) into their strategic planning, curriculum development and preparation for post school engagement initiatives. Many participants were not specific about when this should happen or who should organise it but these statements were shared in response to question 2: 'How can the College strengthen the possibility of successful young people in A<u>n</u>angu communities'? The College could consider what a community engagement model looks like that works towards community aspirations for Pitjantjatjara language and A<u>n</u>angu knowledge acquisition.

Boarding

Across Australia, the boarding school market place is diverse (Osborne et al., in press). For this study, eleven students who have attended boarding schools and have since returned were interviewed as well as parents of these students and some community participants discussed boarding also. The

boarding arrangements for these students include scholarships provided to high-cost independent schools, enrolment in no-cost Aboriginal boarding schools and homestay arrangements to attend independent metropolitan schools. In all cases, students returned home before completing year 12 with the shortest stay being 3 weeks, two staying between 1-2 years and 1 longer than 3 years. Parent expectations of what boarding schools would do for young people also varies.

Community comments about student experiences in boarding reflect a range of ideas and point to the mixed nature of experiences within boarding and attitudes towards boarding:

- *Some of the kids do really well, some don't*
- *By going to another school on their own they can learn English in an intensive mode – maybe two years away at another school is a good time. Like* [metropolitan based Aboriginal boarding school program]*, this is good for boys and girls.*
- *Seeing new places is good*
- *Coming back from boarding they need schools to support them and find training to do*
- *[They need to] stay away to focus at boarding, not have family visit because this unsettles them*
- *They need to better-prepare before going to boarding. For example, attendance – they should practice going to school every day. Orientation visits would help*
- *Boarding schools need to be culturally relevant for our kids*

In general, parent expectations of boarding were that their children would learn English, complete school and become well equipped to get a job and be a leader in the community. These narratives faithfully reproduce policy and media narratives about what boarding is for and what boarding does (Aikman, Dec 12, 2015):

- *I sent my* [child to boarding school] *to learn English better,*
- *Sporting opportunities*
- *We wanted them to learn more. Understand better Piṟanpa way. We can't learn this in community because it is too small.*
- *They can learn more in a city or town. Sometimes we are sad that these things not available in community. If they were, then we would be able to keep our kids here to learn.*
- *We want our young people to be able to talk up strong way like Aṉangu do at Umuwa.*
- *We sent them to boarding to get a good education, because sometimes here the kids fight and tease…*
- *So they can see a different place and whitefellas down that way… what sort of work they do so they get an idea what standard they are up to compared to our College. They've seen all of that now. The work was a bit harder, more homework and lessons after school.*
- *We thought they would finish year 12. All the family were happy that* [they] *away. And I was really proud.*

One parent reflected on the similarities and differences between expectations and motivations for sending their children to boarding within families:

- *I wanted them to go there and then come back here for a while - I was thinking about how they would learn English and learn lots at [boarding school] in that time. But my [family] thought differently. [They] thought they would stay for a long time and come back after they finished school and maybe even train to become a pastor.*
- *I sent my kids to [a church school] so they could learn more about God's word. Sometimes they miss out here in community. Here, they are influenced by other kids and it can be difficult.*

One parent explained that in their experience, there is a period of adjustment where getting a job can help make sense of boarding experiences:

- *I spent 4 years studying at [a boarding school] in Adelaide. Sometimes I didn't go home in the holidays. When I first came back I couldn't find work and I wondered what I was learning all that for. Then I understood when I got a job [all the learning came back]*

One parent reported a positive transition back into community based schooling after sending a child over concerns about issues in the community:

- *In community the kids had problems with teasing, family problems, suicide and lots of other things.. When they were in* [the city] *they stayed strong and were learning lots of good things. Now they are better able to cope in the community school. They want to learn.*

Students explained their expectations of what boarding would do for them in these terms:

- *Mum wanted to get me out of the community to get a better education and go to uni*
- *Getting good education*
- *Getting a job*
- *Just to see what it was like.*
- *Staying at school and getting a job*
- *I was thinking boarding would help me to get more opportunities to get good jobs. I wanted to come back here and work and, like getting good pay.*
- *I had a host family and they would say 'If you stay in school you will get good education and later be able to manage your keycard and you'll get a job*.
- *We wanted to get training at school*
- *I wanted to learn to work in the office or store work*
- *At boarding school, the teachers wanted me to graduate and go to uni and to be a leader for the Indigenous students.*

Students and parents described a range of positive experiences through boarding, covering perceived social and academic benefits:

- *We would go to bed early and get up at 8 o'clock and go to school at 8:30*
- *Getting help with homework was good*
- *Speaking language [there was another Anangu student at the boarding school]*
- *I really liked going on holidays with my host family. We also did lots of different things on weekends.*
- *I liked having friends like African friends and other kids.*
- *I'm still continuing school, educating myself* [having returned to the community].
- *I'm thinking about getting a job*
- *Speaking English*
- *I liked it. I met different people from different countries*
- *I made lots of friends and I liked hanging out*
- *I made friends with a boy from PNG*
- *There were about 30 Aboriginal kids at my school and I got on well with them*
- *It was alright. I liked getting to know Aboriginal people from other places. They treated me like family*

Consistent with research into ingredients for success in Indigenous Education (Bishop, Berryman, Tiakiwai, & Richards, 2003), one student described the importance of staff that you know care about you:

- *[A boarding house staff member] was pretty awesome. When I was around him I felt welcome.*

Students and parents also described some of the challenges:

- *We wanted to go back [to boarding] but it was hard being so far away and being on our own in [the city]. It would have been better if we had been staying all together.*

- *I really missed family*
- *There weren't many Aboriginal kids there.*
- *Talking English all the time made us worry we would forget our own language.*
- *They told us off when we talked in Pitjantjatjara and washed our mouths with soap if we swore. We wanted to go back but didn't want to live with [the same people]. When we arrived we were told not to speak language or we would get separated. When we got caught, they moved us.*
- *I only stayed a week or two. I was too shy and the work was very hard.*
- *The people at my boarding school didn't understand me or where I was from. I didn't say anything though, I kept it to myself. All of the other kids played rugby but I only play AFL.*
- *When I got homesick it made it harder to return, I was really stressed. I missed the flight because I didn't want to go back.*
- *It was a good school but didn't have much for Aboriginal kids. There were lots of whitefellas - that's why they got a little bit homesick and language, you know...*

For some students, these challenges resulted in a return to the community within a short timeframe. Others described some of the strategies they employed to get through these types of challenges:

- *When we rang our families, we would tell them we were homesick. They would tell us to stay and we would be home later in the holidays.*
- *I had a scholarship to go to a boarding school. I stayed 10 weeks. I learned maths, science history technology and I forget the others. It was hard work lots of writing in class. I made a friend but I came home because I was homesick too far away from home. I'm going to go to [a different boarding school] in Adelaide with a friend.*
- *I was worried I would forget my language and so I rang family often*
- *I got homesick. It was hard and so I just worked harder to try and get through it.*
- *I got really homesick. When I was feeling down I listened to music and just focussed on my work. I came home for holidays which helped.*
- *Keeping up with work, homework, sports, footy...that helped. I liked working with the other Aboriginal students. It felt like I was home.*
- *I was worried about losing the language and missing out on culture but now I'm back I can ask elders about country, like the grandparents. I can go camping and listen to stories.*
- *There was one situation...it wasn't normally like this, but one time this kid wouldn't let me sit next to him even though it was the only chair left. I don't know...maybe it was like racism or something. I felt pretty bad but I found that I just had to ignore it.*

Parents shared some of the struggles and concerns their children were going through:

- *It was pretty hard but* [they] *had a mentor family on the weekends that we set up so she can get out of the boarding house. Some weekend she would go camping with our friends who live* [there]. *They were* [working in a high end profession] *and pretty well off. They lived with them on weekends and got to see that side of... different style of living.*
- *A lot of these people come back from college and they have 3 or 4 years rest - they should get straight into work*

Parents also discussed difficulties with a range of aspects of the boarding process including student selection, form filling and dealing with conflict:

- *There was an Indigenous Education Officer at the school...or maybe with the scholarship program.... They flew me down there and I stayed in a hotel there and then flew back and we found out that he got accepted then. They used to try real hard ...tried to do all of their work. They were all [Aboriginal kids from another region] there... about 6 of them and they all spoke [the same language]. He was the only desert kid - none of them spoke Pitjantjatjara. There were other friends he met: a PNG little fella that was his little mate - he played rugby and Aussie rules, and he had a Chinese friend too. I went*

down there when they had their Christmas. It's a really flash school. When he came back it was Tjilkatja [cultural business] time. When he came back he went through men's law… he's a wati [man] now.

- *They went on a school excursion. That's what messed [them] up. They went on the trip in the school holidays and didn't get to come home, [they] had to go straight back to school. [They were] really homesick because [they] hadn't come home for that long. [They] liked the trip but needed more support from [the boarding and scholarship program]. We wanted [them] to come back for a week but they wanted us to pay for it… but it didn't work out …. [They] stayed till September all the way from April in [the city] and that's what did [them] in and he came back then. In in the end [they] felt like a prisoner there. Locked in the boarding house and then having that long stretch from April till September. [They] could have gone back on the plane but [they] said, 'No I don't want to go back'.*
- *They locked themselves in the car. We took them to the aeroplane but they were crying.*
- *It was hard… lots of ringing around… all the paper work… it was hard. We needed to get help and we got it from [someone acting in a community position]…. [They] helped us. We told [them] we wanted to send our kids to school and [they] told us some options and helped us fill out the papers and supported us on the journey all the way through.*
- *[Our child] lasted only 6 months. There was an argument with this other student who used to tease [them] and [our child] teased [the student back] and [they] didn't like it. There was no talking [from the school] so we brought them back. [Our child] was getting punished but that other [student] never got punished. They only had one side of the story - only listened to the other student's side, not for [our child].*
- *We didn't really have any contact or relationship with the school. We got a scholarship from [a provider] for [our child]. There was a [person] there that was the support. They worked for [the scholarship program]. There was no contact with the school. It was mainly the mentor family in the city that supported [our child]. They went to the school meetings and supported them and they rang us up and told us what the school was saying.*

For the eleven students who have returned from boarding school, there was an adjustment of expectations and aspirations required. An important thread through the interviews is the continuing aspirations. This is consistent with the findings of a study conducted in 2016 (Osborne et al., in press) where despite social and schooling disruptions, Central Australian families described an early return from boarding in terms a step closer towards success. This was described by Osborne et al. as 'positive attrition'. In much the same way, students and families involved in this study did not view non-completion of boarding school programs as failure, but more in terms of strengthening or at least re-orienting the students' aspirations for the future.

- *When I finish school I want to find work in [my community]. I want to work in child care and I'm hoping the College can help me do some training to get that job.*
- *We want [them] to keep going. [Their] cousin is a wati [man] but he still goes to school in Alice Springs. We use that as an example for [our child] tell [them] that [they] need to keep going too. We sent [them] to Alice Springs he had a little experience with town mob.*
- *Now he's doing that training for work in Cairns with the College but he still has to finish that last one off for Cairns.*
- *I want him to finish school and get a job*
- *We'd like to see him finish year 12. And he wants to as well.*
- *We talk to all of the kids all the time and other young fellas who come. We tell them school is important and they need to go to school and then get a good job and look after your families.*
- *Mum wanted me to stay at the school. My family were a little disappointed [that I came home and didn't finish]. I feel more confident now speaking English. I want to get a job.*
- *I want to work in my own community but sometimes go for meetings. I could work in Alice Springs*
- *The teachers have noticed that my kids are clever and confident to speak up They talk about their good ideas confidently without shame [since they returned from boarding]*

These accounts suggest that there are issues that need to be addressed regarding boarding programs for Anangu young people. This report contributes to an emerging body of research that can inform all aspects of the boarding system and policy making. Guenther et al. (2017) explain that current boarding policies and funding models are not based on existing evidence, but tend to work from assumptions and truisms about boarding by those with influence. The College does not provide full time boarding and so the kinds of considerations that are important are the aspirations of families and young people and what role the College has to play in terms of strengthening those aspirations and what kinds of collaborations with boarding programs that students are accessing are needed.

A common theme when talking to families and communities about boarding was the articulation of a need to revitalise semi-residential training programs based out of the Yulara campus. A number of comments advocating a semi residential focus have been shared in the previous section on teachers and teaching. A number of further comments spoke in support of the idea:

- *It would be good to have the kids stay here (Yulara) to learn*
- *Spending time focussed and away from family – shopping and seeing them on the weekend is good. Maybe we can have a model where students are focussed and separate during the week and then see family on the weekend. They can then swap groups for the next week.*
- *Coming together, learning about other communities*

The close proximity of the Yulara campus to the resort was also recognised as a potential issue where young people are so familiar with the area and can easily take off:

- *At Yulara it's very close to the shops and they might run away.*
- *They might not want to go here (Yulara), I'm thinking about other options (where the kids aren't thinking about running away)*

Discussion

In response to the two main questions of this research, the evidence suggests an urgency regarding the need for young people to work and be involved in training, to be strengthening their engagement with Pitjantjatjara language, Anangu knowledges and Elders, and to develop confidence to engage Western social and academic spaces. The key areas of training and work, teachers and teaching, family, community and boarding set out key focus areas to guide strategic planning for the College. It is clear that this will require aspects of family and community engagement, training and employer collaborations and curriculum and pedagogical approaches that do not look like approaches that are applied elsewhere.

Some examples of these tensions that need local community 'red dirt' contextualisation:

1. Current policies and approaches to boarding could impact the survival of communities. Imanpa community has seen a reduced population due to conflicts, deaths and shifting opportunities over the last year or so. This has resulted in the closing of the clinic, police station, Mt Ebenezer Roadhouse and other services. If the handful of secondary aged students are sent to boarding school en masse as is current policy impulse, the College would be forced to close the secondary program leaving no local community options for students on return to the community. This would in turn put pressure on the primary school as schools that remain under 12 students tend to be closed in the Northern territory. The

two nearest NTG schools of Lilla and Ukaka suffered this fate in the last decade. It is difficult to see how the community could survive losing local schooling options on top of current closures.

2. Currently there is a national focus on curriculum (The Australian Curriculum) and Closing the Gap measures focus on NAPLaN scores which test standardised knowledge in English and maths. Participants in this study are supportive of the improvement of student outcomes in English and maths but also speak strongly on the importance of local language and knowledge development. The College is well-positioned as an Independent Aboriginal School to develop culturally and contextually responsive materials and family/community engagement models but this needs to be collaboratively designed, prioritised and resourced for success.

3. Training and employment was regularly discussed by participants as an indicator of a successful young person and as a priority the College should be addressing. At Ayers Rock Resort, a National Indigenous Training Academy (NITA) has made significant inroads since commencing in 2010 into Indigenous employment targets. Not only was NITA not named as a potential training and employment destination for young people by participants, the resort was only mentioned twice in cursory comments. This presents challenges and opportunities on two fronts: there may be a need to strengthen collaboration with this well-resourced Commonwealth employment program but there is clearly also a requirement to develop employment, training and enterprise opportunities that relate to Anangu aspirations and interests as distinct from national Indigenous program approaches.

There are many other issues that need to be considered by the College Board and management in terms of brokering the interests of local families and communities and the interests of national policy and program initiatives that layer into the Nyangatjatjara College landscape. Since commencing in 1997, the College has fluctuated through eras of financial, governance and management concerns. It is now well placed to move from a reactive existence, caught between managing a myriad of political, financial and related-business crises and the management and education needs of the College. This study lays out a clear direction to establish a strong Anangu-centric education agenda. The College is stable in terms of resources, governance and management and has had no better opportunity in its history to advance an Anangu education program that is responsive to the demands and aspirations of Anangu students, families and communities.

Comparison to teacher responses

Individual and group workshops and discussions were held with Piranpa (non-Aboriginal) teaching, leadership and administrative staff from all three campuses. The questions focused on teacher understandings of community aspirations and reflections on the role of teachers in strengthening those aspirations. Responses were understandably diverse given the multiple sites and varied length of tenure. Community and peer engagement is also diverse, For example, Imanpa is a one teacher campus and so the teacher has limited engagement with peers and a small student cohort, Yulara is the administrative centre with a large professional peer network but is remotely located from the community of Mutitjulu, so the nature of community engagement differs greatly to other sites, and Docker River is the largest community covering both primary and secondary students, but is also the greatest distance from Yulara, the administrative centre of the College and where services such as the airport are located.

Q. What do you think a successful young person looks like in Anangu communities?

Responses from Piranpa College staff included

- *Cultural knowledge*
- *Respectful*
- *Understands the different social contexts*
- *Confident*
- *Strong role model*
- *Happy*
- *Feeling good about themselves*
- *Leaders*
- *Helping their community*
- *Family*
- *Kind*

There were many correlations with Anangu participant narratives which are set out in terms of general principles. Responses such as 'understands the different social contexts' links with the notion of being 'strong in two worlds'. What is teachers and community members mean by these ideas and how the College could participate in strengthening young people towards such an outcome is an interesting proposition that invites further investigation.

Q. What do you think Anangu aspirations for their children are?

This question drew vastly different responses across the staff cohort. Some took a fairly fatalistic view:

- *Lost hope*
- *Sad*
- *Feel powerless so don't put in effort*

…whereas other responses described more positive outlooks:

- *Opportunities*
- *Education*
- *English language*
- *Computers*
- *Deal with people outside*
- *Happy and healthy*
- *Parents would want at least the standard of education that they received.*
- *Knowing the two ways*

One significant difference between Anangu and Piranpa responses was a focus on work and training. While this was by far the most common aspiration and definition of a successful young person for Anangu participants, it was not mentioned by Piranpa staff.

Q. What do you see as important aspects of your role at the College?

Responses to this question were diverse and covered a range of aspects of a teacher's work. One teacher spoke about expectations:

- *Expect the kids to complete their schooling – year 12*

A number of comments reflected on pedagogical considerations:

- *Literacy and numeracy needed for solving problems*
- *Self-directed learning, curiosity*
- *Foster a joy for learning and critical thinking.*

- *Encourage confidence and not shame.*
- *Enabling the students to see connection between education and the outcome. That's why we need the practical application to come first. Then do the worksheet. Writing came easier in the afternoon because they got the point.*
- *Intensives for a few days*

There was reflection on intercultural aspects of the teaching and learning context including building relationships and the importance of teachers' cultural competence:

- *Understanding that Anangu kids react differently. For example, praise can cause them to be shamed.*
- *Able to work in an Anangu learning space where learning is done through modelling*
- *Building relationships*
- *Having the trust of the people*
- *Looking after people.*
- *Finding out how they learn so I can teach them*
- *Getting to know the people, kids and AEWs.*
- *Be part of the community. Spend time with people. Don't hide away. Be involved. It's important to learn from the experience*
- *Start afresh and don't listen to negativity*

Some comments focussed on 'big picture' ideas:

- *Help kids to value school and learning*
- *Understand about the wider community, Australia, the world*
- *Help the kids to reach their potential*
- *Supporting the young people to succeed in life so they can be assets in their community.*

And other comments reflected on relatively small-scale concerns:

- *Preparing students for life after school such as filling in forms, English language, basic life skills, date of birth, signatures and so on.*
- *To leave something positive that the kids learn from me*

In a couple of interview groups, there was some discussion as to whether teachers were there to 'help' or whether there is better language that can inform a teacher's positioning in the community.

Q. What are the limitations for Piranpa teachers in building Anangu student aspirations?

Some teachers focussed on the challenge of developing culturally responsive approaches:

- *Australian Curriculum - we should be looking at where they are at, it is culturally inappropriate*
- *Takes time to understand how culture influences classroom. For example, we ask direct questions and expect direct answers.*

Other responses focussed on issues with resourcing and other practical or industrial aspects of the remote teaching context:

- *How long we can tough it out.*
- *Students moving to other communities*
- *We don't have Internet or even a computer that works.*
- *Limited resources and equipment such as for mechanics, cooking, music*
- *Distance, resources, personnel*
- *Now in my second year I'm standing back more and learning more.*

- *Changeover of staff can be an issue. Leadership team need to work together so when changes of staff everyone has same information so that the work can continue on instead of starting from scratch.*
- *Trips to and from college and community should be factored into our work because it cuts into preparation time so not able to stay and build the necessary relationships with community.*
- *When teachers come for short stints it limits their ability to communicate.*
- *Teacher wellbeing needs to be looked at if we are to retain them.*
- *We need to have better communication between the three campuses the kids need to go out into communities to experience.*
- *We need more of a presence in the community. Makes it harder that we are not in the community. The college has a bad reputation in community. We need them to see the good work we are doing. Taking photos to community and photo newsletters helps.*

These comments tended to focus on describing issues with the context or community:

- *Consistency and stability (the kids need consistency in their lives to feel safe and learn)*
- *Real parent participation like how we had a parent learning alongside their child. Some parents are only sending kids to school to get ABSTUDY and they're not valuing education.*

In contrast, some participants moved responses to this question towards thinking about

- *I am encouraged when I hear that a past student is doing well.*
- *It's always about building relationships. Also important between staff, college and families*

- *I have built good relationships in the three communities.*
- *Wati workshop was popular with parents (but not so much with students) but was an effective community engagement activity*
- *Learning outside of the classroom and in country works better. "They are different kids" they are in their own space.*

There is scope to engage the teaching staff in the level of thinking and reflection that connects daily practice with the broader ideas about what outcomes the College is working towards.

Q. What do you need to understand to work better in this space?

- *I'm in two minds about how far can we go for example in talking about issues such as social justice or incarceration? AEWs are helpful here but not always available.*

These comments moved away from reflection on personal understandings and tended to point to a lack in community understanding and capacity:

- *We want the students to have a vision for their future and when needed, to fight for their rights.*
- *Is it our place to have students discuss ways [the] community can be improved?*
- *Need professional development with parents and community to help understand the two ways for example, behaviour management*
- *The community needs to understand about the effect of trauma but it's hard to talk about this with community for fear of sounding accusing. People need to understand how the brain is developed due to different stimuli. But don't want to offend people.*

This is an interesting contrast to Anangu participant responses that suggest teachers need to come to terms with the Anangu context.

Q. What are some of the ways that you work with Anangu in a both ways model?

This question was also clearly asking for reflection on personal practice but teacher responses focussed largely on the work of AEWs or perceived limitations of AEWs:

- *Many AEWs are not confident or perhaps shy. They seem to be better in single gender groups*
- *Two AEWs did well leading a discussion on sexual health and relationships.*
- *When we find the AEWs strength we have more success e.g. admin, supporting students, behaviour management*
- *They need training*
- *On a camp, AEWs made tough decisions around discipline and this was good to see in action.*
- *We need job descriptions and to recruit more AEWs for specific jobs at the college: admin, wellbeing etc. We need to make sure that they know what is expected of them in their role.*
- *We need male AEWs*

These comments suggest that more can be done to encourage teachers to be responsive and active learners in the Anangu education context. The kinds of approaches Anangu are requesting in this study require nuanced and highly proficient both ways pedagogies. The College will need to develop an approach to support staff to engage in this learning process.

Recommendations

1. Training and Work

We recommend the College develop a training focus that prepares young people for work that is connected to employers and employment opportunities based in the region.

   a. Initiate a process where an audit of available jobs and potential employment is done. Students should then be engaged to connect them to work they are interested in through training, work experience, and other relevant opportunities. Projects such as Empowered Communities may have some data sets that could be drawn on to assist in this process. Every College student should have a plan for moving from school to work before they leave, wherever possible.
   b. Relevant training providers should be engaged to deliver semi-residential training intensives based out of Yulara or other venues such as Umuwa or Alice Springs. The data collected for this study supports these intensives being offered in gender-split groups with access made available for young people from all three communities.
   c. Work to establish strong relationships with employers in the region. If necessary, this may require employment of expertise in the field by consultancy and/or look to make an appointment to the NAC board to ensure the College has the connections and skills available to make this possible. Participants advocated for senior community members to mentor young people and support them to stay focussed and negotiate senior schooling and transitions to employment. Many participants also talked about the need for young people to have a *malpa* [companion] so placements could benefit from having pairs or small groups engaging at potential worksites.
   d. A leadership and governance strategy should be included to follow up on community suggestions that young people get involved in community organisations through attending meetings, developing leadership skills and working closely with senior community members. Moving beyond merely observing adults engaging in governance activities, there is an opportunity to develop a learning focus that builds language and pedagogical tools (Nakata, Nakata, Keech, & Bolt, 2012) for rethinking

the governance space and challenging the conditions of power-laden dialogue models rather than simply inducting young people into the way things are. This type of approach would require a partnership and resourcing model to enable development and implementation of a unique approach.

e. Both-ways social capital development: much of the 'secret' to getting a job and thriving in it relates to the social context of the work. Studies show that in the Northern Territory, there are many jobs currently held by non-locals in remote communities that don't have qualifications (Guenther & Boyle, 2013). These could be taken up by locals but a skills approach alone is not enough. Anangu young people can benefit from explicit social instruction to demystify the implicit social codes (Delpit, 1993) that determine success in the workplace. 'Whitefella Culture' (Hargrave, 1991) is an example of a text that was produced to assist this type of both-ways learning process.

2. Teachers and teaching

We recommend the College establish a curriculum leadership working group, including local Anangu Educators to develop culturally responsive pedagogies which include Pitjantjatjara language instruction and assessment, contextually relevant curriculum resources and a community engagement strategy to embed learning on country, intergenerational engagement and bush trips within a broader strategy.

a. Acquire the expertise in language and curriculum development to work on this project with the staff and students. To do well, this will require a dedicated focus and investment. Anangu staff development is a key component of this strategy and all Anangu staff should engage in training towards a Cert III in Education Support with preference towards CERT IV where appropriate.

b. Consider potential organisations as partners for this work. Examples could include: Ara Irititja, PYEC, and UniSA among others.

c. Non-local teachers to participate in training in language and culture studies. This could include enrolment in the UniSA Pitjantjatjara Language and Culture Summer School or an internally arranged intensive or ongoing training model. This should be mandated for staff who do not have the language and cultural skills and understandings for negotiating both-ways education spaces in Anangu communities on appointment. Opportunities for whole of staff critical self-reflection and professional development regarding their role as a professional educator within a dual epistemological context should also be established.

d. Following on from Recommendation 1 [training and work], there is a need to establish a well-structured senior years pattern for completing SACE modules with a focus on training and work-related subjects. This can be developed from year 10 and should become part of the accepted and normalised practice for students to transition to and complete senior schooling with a range of experiences and skills that prepare them for success in post-school transitions.

e. Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara language programs should be established and embedded into the curriculum and pedagogy. The Australian Curriculum and SACE modules are now available to provide frameworks for planning and assessment. The program should be rigorous, well-structured and assessed to monitor student progress and program effectiveness. Bush trips, community engagement and

traditional knowledge engagement activities can be incorporated into the broader teaching and assessment focus in this regard.

3. **Strengthening and engaging families**

We recommend the College develop a strategy for working directly with families to support student learning and future-focussed planning.

   a. This could include a dedicated family liaison officer at each campus and establishing appropriate spaces within the school or community for families to meet with staff.
   b. There needs to be a coordinated attitude and approach to regularly touching base with families, particularly to reinforce positive behaviours and student outcomes as regular practice.
   c. For senior secondary students, family meetings should be held more than annually to review the training and employment plan and to discuss student and family aspirations. Family aspirations and approaches to education are diverse across the communities and working closely with families will assist teachers in targeting programs and approaches more to be more closely aligned to student needs.

4. **Community Engagement**

We recommend the College develop a community engagement strategy that includes community organisations, senior community figures and forums for local community decision making and actions.

   a. Community organisations: work with community organisations (MCAC, IDA, KCCC, WU, CLC - URM) in mapping jobs and tracking young people's engagement with training and work.
   b. Senior community members: Participants consistently identified Elders as a vital resource for providing access to language and cultural knowledge, mentoring and supporting teachers and the teaching program.
   c. Each of the three communities should have regular forums for discussing education and College business with teachers and leadership staff. This provides opportunities for communicating board and College leadership information and decisions as well as connects teachers formally to families and community. NAC member directors should be involved in organising and leading these events when they occur in their home community.

5. **Boarding**

We recommend the College develop a policy for engaging with boarding programs.

   a. Full time boarding: For those families who wish to send their children to boarding, the 'market' is currently disjointed and difficult to navigate access, particularly for scholarships to fee paying schools. It would be beneficial to negotiate a relationship with a scholarship program and to support access for those families where this is likely to be a positive experience. The Smith family has the partnership brokering contract for SA/NT and supports a significant number of students from the region

(Osborne et al., in press). They have similar collaborations in the West Coast of South Australia that could provide a template.

  i. Implement a policy and strategy for maintaining contact with students who are away for boarding as they will need to transition back into either school, training or work initiatives and planning to capitalise on the experiences of students who have been away for boarding is recommended.
  ii. It may be beneficial to establish a couple of partner schools as potential partners for both ways learning and potential boarding destinations. It was obvious from the interviews that some schools are better equipped to work with Anangu students than others. Building capacity for success through ongoing relationship and exchange may increase the likelihood of College students having a positive experience and potentially staying longer in boarding programs.

b. Semi residential boarding: The College should revitalise short term intensives based out of the boarding facilities at the Yulara campus.

  i. Training should be closely linked to locally and regionally available employment.
  ii. Family and student training and work plans can inform what programs are made available.
  iii. Intensives should be single-gender programs and allow equal access to students from all 3 communities.
  iv. This approach could also be used to access expertise for non-accredited specialist programs including: Pitjantjatjara language camps, STEM workshops and so on.

6. **Both-ways workforce development**

We recommend the College implement a workforce development strategy that covers the core elements of the school plan.

a. There is ongoing training required for teachers in literacy and numeracy approaches, student wellbeing, IT resources and so on in any school program. In the interviews, there was a lack of capacity on behalf of many staff to find the language and conceptual tools to locate themselves as an educator within an Anangu education context. A strategy needs to be documented and implemented to: build critical self-awareness skills amongst Piranpa staff, build language and cultural competence amongst staff, to orient teachers to the conditions and expectations of working within a coordinated both ways education model. This might require teachers to spend time with the board to ask questions and understand the overall aims and values system the College operates within as well as shared teacher and AEW planning and training opportunities.

b. AEWs need a rigorous and ongoing training program to develop confidence and tools to engage in classroom practice as well as play pivotal roles in planning, organising and delivering language and cultural learning programs. Residential intensives based out of the Yulara campus could be useful in supporting this approach. This could be developed within the current partnership that has been established with Batchelor.

Where to begin?

The recommendations provided in this report represent a strategic development shift in the direction of the College. Responding to these recommendations will require resourcing, planning, structural development and implementation.

We suggest that 2018 needs to be a year of planning and preparation ahead of implementation in 2019. Establishing a curriculum leadership group that includes College leadership, non-local teaching staff and Anangu educators should begin meeting to develop a model for what curriculum reform is needed and how it can be established. This includes training and work priorities as well as language and cultural aspects of the curriculum. This group could set out markers of success with a corresponding timeframe so that the College has a clear idea about what the focus needs to be and to enable measurement of achievement along the way. These could include measures of community engagement, curriculum development, staff training engagement and completions, and student engagement with training and work.

An audit of the training and employment landscape needs to precede the development of relationships with employers and communities. There may need to be a dedicated staff member or consultant to undertake this work. Mapping professional development for 2018 is needed to begin to build capacity within the staff that relates to the strategic direction of the College.

This change and strategic re-focus agenda has clear financial implications that will need to be assessed, costed, and worked into the budgetary planning and financial context of the College.

Remaining steps until project completion

Presentation of this report is the final activity scheduled for completion in 2017 within the agreement. The NAC board should consider the findings and recommendations of the report as a tool for informing strategic planning and resourcing and capacitating community aspirations. There are two outstanding items within the project for completion in 2018 including:

1. The commissioning of a significant artwork to encapsulate key elements of the findings of the research. The NAC board has requested that this includes artists from all 3 communities and that students might also be involved in the process of documenting their aspirations through an art project.
2. An international presentation to be made by the research team. The conference and location is still to be decided.

Conclusion

Anangu perspectives on describing successful young people and how education might strengthen community aspirations form a strong foundation for strategic planning. According to data collected for this study, successful young people are confident, have a strong sense of identity and belonging, take up training and work opportunities, engage in both ways learning and contribute productively to the family. Key areas of focus for the college include developing comprehensive training and work programs, strengthening family and community engagement, producing local language and knowledges curriculum, resources and learning opportunities, and implementing a both-ways workforce development strategy to underpin the overall approach.

National Indigenous education policy measures and narratives about school attendance, English language instruction and boarding school as the preferred secondary education option are visible within Anangu narratives, but are by no means central. The importance of family, local community, local language and knowledges, community based employment opportunities and intergenerational engagement are argued repeatedly across communities and age groups. The College Board and

management has an obligation now to respond by developing a rigorous both-ways curriculum and pedagogical approach that strengthens Anangu identity and secures school to work transition for all school leavers. It is also important that the College engages with communities to co-design this model and to become champions for articulating and arguing for an education approach that strengthens Anangu aspirations.

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