Good Practice: Community consultation

Community Consultation at Eaglehawk Secondary College

Since 2003, Eaglehawk Secondary College has run focus groups of parents and students to seek their views on matters affecting the school. This was a suggestion from school council arising from the low participation rate of parents in the Parent Opinion Survey. School council wanted a discussion style forum that enabled them to obtain feedback in a different way.

The Focus Groups have been very successful and have been organised by the college chaplain and a local minister who was a co-opted member of council. School council thought it was a good idea to find out more on some of the areas that parents had commented on in the Parent Opinion Survey.

Eaglehawk Secondary College also has student focus groups to try to find out more from students in relation to the Attitudes to School Survey data. They used a person from a local community organisation to facilitate these groups. The findings of all focus groups were shared at the education sub-committee and the school council, and have been useful in shaping changed practice and future directions.

Another successful initiative from school council was having parent members from council address the audience of Year 6 parents at the annual Year 6 Information Night. This was an idea from council as a way to promote the college to new parents and to promote council membership as a positive and non scary experience!

Community Consultation at Derrimut Heath Primary School

Derrimut Heath Primary School has a long history of community consultation. The school strongly believes and actively promotes the partnership between parents, students and teachers.

Strategies the school uses to consult with its community include:

- surveys
- focus groups of parents and teachers that are conducted to discuss new directions, issues or concerns as they arise
- policies that are due to be reviewed are sent to randomly selected families for feedback.

In addition, school council is part of a locally developed network that meets and shares ideas and strategies and therefore enables the sharing of best practice across a number of schools.
Community Consultation at Lloyd Street Primary School

One aspect of community consultation at Lloyd Street Primary School is the annual surveying conducted by the special projects sub-committee. This sub-committee sources data from prep parents, year 3 parents and students, and students who have left the school during the prior year. This information then drives further considerations for change.

The special projects sub-committee also:

- fosters pride in the school and its achievements and activities within the school community
- responds to opportunities for local press coverage of school events, and
- researches and evaluates ideas and projects that can promote the school to the wider community.