Stage 2

Gray St Learning Community

Overall objective to renew an emphasis on learning as a desirable and valuable activity

The second stage of the project has been build on the work done in stage 1 and on its findings, to engage potential adult learners in further education and move them into programs which enhance the skills and provide confidence to engage more fully with the community.

SGAE has received funding to run this 18 month project from the ACFE Board Capacity and Innovation Fund 2011.

The Gray St Learning Community project aims to develop a Learning Community within the Gray St population.

A Learning Community is a group of people who share common emotions, values and beliefs, are actively engaged in learning together from each other and by habitation.

This project is attempting to use a common point of interaction – responsibility for a child's education – to assist in creating an environment where adult learners needs and wishes can be more easily identified. And programs and learning experiences can be promoted, customised or developed to address them.

In addition the learning community environment has the capacity to generate intelligence through co-operative learning and harnessing the talents that already exist within the group.

SGAE and Gray St Primary School Hamilton are both educational organisations seeking to enhance lives through involvement in learning activities. Whilst Gray St Primary School has a captive audience of mandatory attendees in its student population, it is also recognised in Stage 1 that much of the success o and progress made by the children attending depends on the attitudes and support of their parents and guardians in their home environment.

SGAE relies on elective attendance of adults who wish to re-engage with learning in some capacity on a non mandatory basis.

In a Learning Community, members do not nominate to join but are automatically members but can participate to whatever level they feel comfortable.

Some members find it much easier than others. It is important however that encouragement, inclusion and acceptance are given at all times.

In a Learning community

- Learning can be formal. Informal, structured, unstructured, any size
- Skills and talents of members of the group are capitalised
- Collaboration and Partnerships increase learning possibilities
- Provides unity and inclusion to all members
- Identifies and caters for individual and group needs and wishes
- Appreciates diversity and encourages contributions and involvement

The Gray St Learning Community is being developed by

- Information and Involvement

  School Newsletters/websites/Parent Information

- Events and organised activities

  Teaching Kids to Thrive – Michael Grose

- Learning / Sharing

  Developing Relevant Programs

- Formal Education

  Customising programs/providing ongoing relevance

There is a great opportunity to capitalise on skills and knowledge already in the Learning Community as these can be shared with others.

The formal education part is almost an adjunct to the program so the program will help to ensure what is offered to them is the formal education needs are recognised as a result of the learning community activities, specific, customised programs may be developed to fill that need.

Challenge – to ensure the Learning Community develops, remains in line with needs of the community, is sustainable and grows.

To develop the Learning community will need a steering group of interested parents to help gather the information, run initial events and guide further learning opportunities.

The Gray St Learning Community Steering committee has been developed with a view to establishing ownership and sustainability. Through the Steering Group the approach previously referred – information and involvement, events and organised activities, learning/sharing and formal education will be developed over the next 12 months with the facilitation and assistance of the SGAE project worker.

In conclusion, the project that was developed and undertaken in 2010, although not as successful as envisaged, provided a platform to build on and undertake in the Gray St Learning Community.

The success of the learning within this project will help in providing a framework or model for linking and developing learning opportunities and it is hoped in engaging the hard to reach learner.