

# Cherbourg

A

Story of Leadership

and

Indigenous School

and Community Change

30/06/2006

# Cherbourg Story

- Chris Sarra



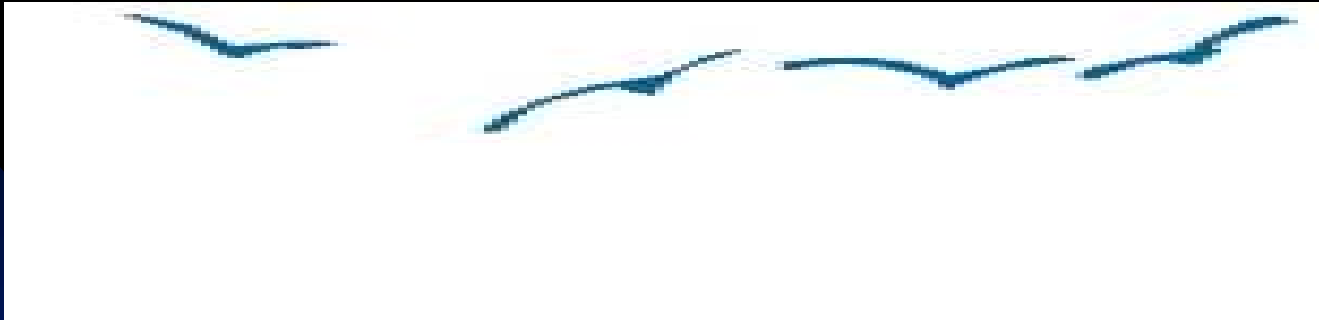
- This is a story about a leader
- A black Australian leader
- And his team of teachers, teacher aides and community people
- It is a story of how they changed a school



Indigenous Education Leadership  
Institute

# CHANGES

- Results in test scores in literacy and numeracy
- Self esteem
- Keenness to be at school
- Teachers teaching- focus on academic tasks
- Community support
- Fun to learn and be in a school culture that valued Indigenous life



## Birds out of the white mist

# RESULTS

**Authentic, appropriate teaching**

**Passion**

**Belief that Indigenous kids can and will succeed**

**Hard work by everyone**

**Teamwork**

**Strong resilient vision, goals and activities**

**Extremely Strong Focus upon Pedagogy**

- **Re-Thinking and Re-Learning**
- **Culture Change together**

# Strong and smart

- Young, proud, black and deadly
- Proud to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Smart and deadly at numeracy and literacy and other learnings
- Strong in understanding what it means to be unique in this land- to be Indigenous

# ACADEMIC SUCCESS FOR INDIGENOUS KIDS

## IN THE BEGINNING ...

- Shock Anger
- Denial Memories
- Organisational memes set upon failure year in, year out
- Despair
- Space, vacuum, passivity, despair
- Silence about future
- Disempowerment, lack of positivity, feeling of depression
- More of the same
- Old paradigm school culture models
- White authorities and black clientele
- *Questions- Time for a change !*
- *A way and vision*

# SUCCESS FACTORS



- CHAOS
- **AN EMERGING PATTERN**
- THROUGH RE-THINKING HOW WE DID WHAT WE DID AS TEACHERS AND COMMUNITY
- RE-LEARNING ABOUT WHAT WAS BEST ABOUT BEING ABORIGINAL
- THE POWER OF ORGANISATIONAL SCHOOL CULTURAL SPIRIT EMERGED, EVOLVED INTO A STRONG AND SMART ETHIC AND ACTIONS
- Connectivity
- Relationships
- Amplification of differences

# LEADERSHIP



## CHAOS –A LEADERSHIP TRANSFORMATIONAL JOURNEY

- ORDER WAS THERE
- STRUCTURE, STRENGTH SMARTNESS EMERGED
- AUTHENTICITY and pride of aboriginality was reborn
- CREATIVE RETHINKING PROCESSES
- New ideas began flowing into INTELLECTUAL SPACE WITH VISIONS AND GOALS AND NEW ACTIVITIES
- VALUING AND RE-NURTURING IDENTITY
- BEING PROUD OF BEING BLACK PSYCHOLOGY

# LEARNING

stronger  
smarter

- AUTHENTICITY
- SELF ORGANISING SYSTEM
- COMMUNICATIONS AND E-CONNECTIONS
- NORMAL LEARNING TO HIGHER LEARNING
- INNOVATION
- UNDERSTANDING INDIGENOUS PEDAGOGY
- PASSION TO SUCCEED
- A JOB TO BE DONE

# LEADERSHIP



- LANGUAGE CERTAINTY AND PRIDE
- BUILDING BLOCKS OF NEW THINKING ABOUT LEARNING AND SCHOOL CURRICULA
- LEADERSHIP TENSION TO CREATE NEW MEANING
- ANCIENT WITH THE NOW
- PROACTIVITY
- CLEAR PHILOSOPHY
- CLEAR ACTIONS/OPERATIONS
- CHARISMA
- BELIEF IN OURSELVES
- MOTIVATIONAL PEDAGOGY
- CLARITY OF WHAT WE ARE HERE FOR AND WHAT WE ARE ON ABOUT

# CHANGED CULTURE THROUGH LEADERSHIP

*BY ADDRESSING*

- ARTIFACTS
- VALUES
- ASSUMPTIONS

# SCHOOL LIFE

- ORDERED
- RITUALISED
- STRUCTURED



- CREATIVE SPACE
- AUTHENTICITY
- IDENTITY AND PRIDE
- CREATIVITY AND SUCCESSES
- CELEBRATIONS

# “The line in the sand”

## Results jobs, health, housing, education

- Early Years of Schooling
- HIGH SCHOOL
- BETWEEN THE CRACKS along their school journey
- APPRENTICESHIPS
- JOBS
- TAFE/UNIVERSITY

**What does this story mean for you  
and your professional contexts ?**

# Next Steps for us ?



- For us now it means teaching others, supporting leaders in schools with Indigenous students, spreading the news that it can and will be done...there is no turning back and we are now programmed to succeed...Chris Sarra and his team flew into the white mists of history and have come out succeeding with student success- the golden eagle has landed !

# Future

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EPLD 2006

EMERGING PACIFIC  
LEADERS' DIALOGUE

28 JUNE – 12 JULY 2006

NAVIGATING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER