

Mountain Creek State High School

What did they set out to achieve?

Mountain Creek State High School already delivered a compulsory Education and Career Planning Program (ECP) for all students, however staff felt that more could be done to support those Year 10 students considered 'at risk' of disengaging from further education or employment.

The current program needed to be strengthened and made more relevant to the needs of this group of students and so a group of interested staff set out to re-design it using the *Blueprint* as an evaluation tool.

Staff aimed to develop a program that was relevant, interesting and engaging for students who tended to have:

- Low level literacy and numeracy skills
- Historically low academic achievement
- Low self-esteem with regard to their own academic abilities
- Disengagement from schoolwork that was not perceived as interesting, varied and /or worthwhile
- Inattention and/or behavioural issues
- An inability to articulate career goals or to appreciate the value of career goals.

Engaging students in the content of the program was also thought to help retain teachers in that particular learning area as "the more engaged the students are, the easier they are to teach".

What did they do?

Staff at Mountain Creek High School set out to use the *Blueprint* to re-design, develop and implement a stand-alone career development unit, and found that an important first step was to perform a needs assessment to ensure the program was designed with the learning requirements of the students in mind. While the *Blueprint* suggests suitable developmental phases for particular age groups, staff found that for this particular group this was not appropriate.

The *Blueprint* was then used to evaluate the existing program and identify gaps in program content, and to locate appropriate resources. Central to the program was the *Be Real Game*, and this was adapted to the developmental phase most suitable for the students needs. To facilitate the development of Area B: Learning and Work Exploration

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competencies the program also included an excursion to the local TAFE skills expo, and a week of work experience.

Did the *Blueprint* help?

The *Blueprint* framework demonstrated to staff that intentional career development prepares students for life. It also enabled them to see how career education goals aligned with broader educational goals, with one staff member commenting:

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