

Scitech Maths Gala brings fun by the numbers

Sixty-six Pilbara teachers came together on Saturday 25 February to find out how to make maths more exciting in the classroom, with hands-on activities and professional development sessions by Scitech and maths educators.

Teachers from Karratha, Wickham, Roebourne, Pannawonica, and Onslow converged at the Karratha Leisureplex to hear from Back to Front Maths' Tierney Kennedy, Mathematical Association of WA's Rachael Whitney-Smith, and Scitech's Shyam Drury and Steve Grant.

The conference style event was developed by Scitech Professional Learning Consultant Steve Grant in consultation with the leaders of the Karratha Mathematics Network, including Network leader and Pegs Creek PS Deputy Principal Lisa Campbell.

"The Mathematics Network identified some significant areas in mathematics teaching we wanted to target for our teachers," said Ms Campbell.

"Scitech has been working very closely with our schools and understood where the teachers were at. They were able to bring together all of the elements we needed for teachers and families".

The day featured seminars from maths education experts, hands-on workshops exploring mathematics by enquiry, and a family afternoon full of maths games designed to increase confidence in both children and parents which was attended by around 20 people.

"Parents are an important part of the educational triad. We often think of teachers and students being the most important elements in education, but parents are the key to supporting the work of teachers with their students and bring the lessons they learn in class into the real world," said Scitech Professional Learning Consultant Steve Grant.

"Parents play a vital role in making maths meaningful outside the classroom, and the conversations they have with their children make what they are learning relevant and valuable," he said.

Scitech, with support from Chevron Australia and the State Government of Western Australia, have been working closely with Pilbara teachers for five years through the Pilbara Teacher Support programs. By developing and supporting teacher networks in the area, Scitech and Chevron Australia are helping Pilbara teachers to establish best practice methods and a strong support community for STEM teaching.

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More information

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Presenter background

Shyam Drury

Maths Multiplier, Scitech

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Shyam's unique Inquiry Mathematics workshop prompted teachers to develop their own inquiry skills using a range of different materials as prompts to trigger a rich exploration of mathematical inquiry. His workshop had teachers exploring deep patterns in mathematics and gave them practical skills to translate what they had learned back to the classroom.

Tierney Kennedy

Back to Front Maths

www.backtofrontmaths.com.au

Tierney Kennedy is a nationally renowned presenter and author of over 50 books. Tierney's workshop looked at Place-value and Number in K-3 and 4-8 classrooms, blending in her diagnostic teaching methods with hands-on examples.

Rachael Whitney-Smith

Mathematical Association of Western Australia (MAWA)

www.mawainc.org.au

Rachael presented on using a range of hands-on tools (manipulatives) to explore the teaching of place value and number with an inquiry approach.