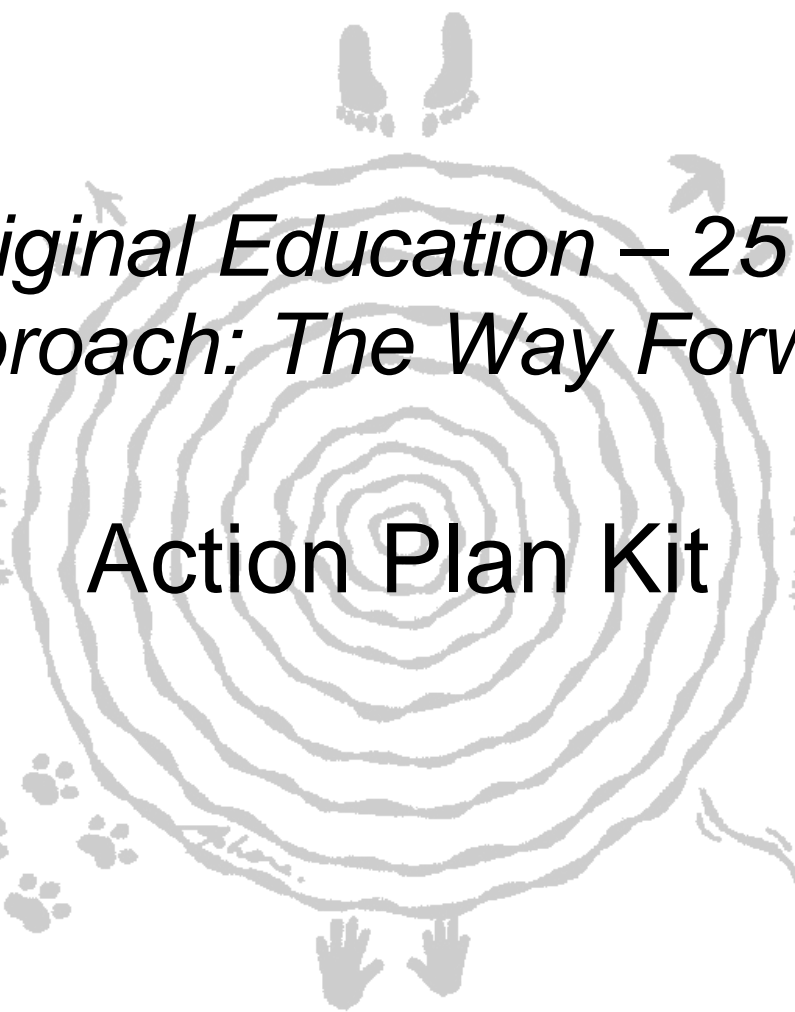


*Aboriginal Education – 25 Year
Approach: The Way Forward*

Action Plan Kit



NSW Teachers Federation 2010 Annual Conference: Aboriginal Education - 25 Year Approach: The Way Forward

The NSW Teachers Federation will continue its long history and tradition of supporting the rights of Aboriginal students and their communities. Building on earlier decisions the Federation developed its first comprehensive policy on Aboriginal education in 1980. Six years later, Federation established the permanent identified position of Aboriginal Education Coordinator. Federation will continue to lead the way forward and demonstrate commitment to Aboriginal education for the next 25 years and beyond.

In 2010, the real life situation faced by Aboriginal students and their communities remains the most pressing human rights issue in our society that confronts the Australian nation.

Federation recognises that persisting with 'more of the same' will not bring about essential, across-the-board institutional change within Australian governments, education authorities and systems. Achieving equality of educational outcomes for Aboriginal students will not occur unless new and innovative approaches are embraced.

Significantly raising Aboriginal students' achievement in education to the levels achieved by non-Aboriginal students must be the highest priority of all Australian governments, education departments, schools and other learning institutions. There are three aspects which need to be addressed to bring about long term, sustainable change and an equality of educational outcomes. There has to be change to the Australian Constitution; a societal change where there is respect for Aboriginal Identity; and a lifelong learning approach to Aboriginal education for the attainment of positive outcomes.

The purpose and function of formal education for Aboriginal people will be better achieved in a national and political environment that officially and legally acknowledges and respects the rights of Aboriginal people. The Australian nation must move to establish, in Australian law, an inclusive relationship between the Australian state and Aboriginal people.

It is the function and responsibility of public schooling and further public education to deliver equal educational outcomes. Government must provide quality, well-funded educational and community programs that allow educational institutions to continually improve outcomes for Aboriginal students for at least 25 years. The success of educational institutions to achieve the outcomes required can either be assisted or hindered by the local, regional and national environments in which they exist.

All political parties, unions and major community organisations must commit to a national dialogue to achieve agreement to recognize the prior sovereignty and legal rights of Aboriginal people in the Australian Constitution. This process will lead to amending both the preamble and the body of the Australian Constitution to acknowledge sovereignty and the rights of Aboriginal people as the First Peoples of this nation.

Bi-partisan support is also needed to establish a national dialogue to determine whether Australia should establish a legislative bill of rights as a mechanism to ensure greater protection of the civil and human rights of Australian citizens.

It is only by the establishment of such legal instruments that genuine respect will be demonstrated at the national level. Only then will mutual respect become part of the fabric of an Australian nation that truly acknowledges its past and what it represents for the future of its First Peoples.

The positive reinforcement of Aboriginal Identity in the wider national community is essential for educational institutions to achieve improved educational outcomes. However, the internal culture of each educational institution must also demonstrate respect and reinforcement of Aboriginal Identity and culture.

Educational institutions must successfully create an environment whereby Aboriginal students and their community feel respected and acknowledged and where their well being and Aboriginal Identity is strengthened and reinforced. The establishment of such an environment is also a necessary pre-requisite within these institutions for Aboriginal students and their communities to achieve improved educational outcomes. Government must also expand Aboriginal language programs, thus ensuring Aboriginal languages play an integral part in enhancing students' understanding of culture and maintaining their cultural identity.

The ability of the education system to achieve equal educational outcomes is related to the skills that a child has developed at the time of enrolment in school. A child's entry level skills at enrolment correlate to a number of factors including the child's socio-economic background, educational achievement of the carers, whether a child attended playgroup or pre-school, and the type of educational programs delivered at the pre-school.

Commitment to the Aboriginal people must be across all domains - in education, health, housing, economic participation, social indicators, governance and leadership. These are foundation building blocks which have to be implemented by the Federal Government and by all States and Territories, to gain equality in outcomes and address the advancement of the First Peoples of our nation. The maintenance of this will need commitment in perpetuity.

In the light of the *Close the Gap – Statement of Intent* health agreement (3 June 2010) between the NSW Premier and NSW Opposition Leader, "to work in a bi-partisan spirit to close the 17 year life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians within 20 years", there must be bi-partisan support at all levels of government to provide support for Aboriginal parents and their children. This will require increased funding to develop and implement, in collaboration with local communities, system wide programs that support Aboriginal mothers during pregnancy and parents/caregivers up until the time of a child's school enrolment.

Where a government school serves an Aboriginal community, a pre-school should be attached to the local primary school. All Aboriginal children should be encouraged and where it is needed, assisted to attend pre-school. Transport assistance is especially required in many communities to ensure that pre-school aged children can attend pre-school and to enable caregivers and young children to access interagency services.

Government needs to significantly increase the provision of Support Teacher Learning Assistance resources to schools with Aboriginal students, and provide adequate resources to assist these children in Years K to 6. Too many Aboriginal children continue to progress through primary school with low literacy and numeracy achievement levels.

At present 60% of the national enrolment of Aboriginal students in public education is in New South Wales (30%) and Queensland (30%). If outcomes are not significantly improved in these states then it will not be possible to achieve equal outcomes nationally.

On 13 February 2008 in the *National Apology to the Stolen Generations*, Australia acknowledged the need for our nation to say 'Sorry' for the previous injustices inflicted upon generations of Aboriginal people. 'Sorry' is never enough when followed by a lack of change and action.

Supporting documents attached:

1. Statement of Principles (PDF)
2. Reconciliation Australia: Reconciliation Action Plans (PDF)
3. 2010 NSW Teachers Federation Annual Aboriginal Education Profile (PDF & Word version)
4. Blank version of the Profile document for your personalisation (PDF & Word version)

Statement of Principles

Principles are described in terms of the right of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to high quality schooling and the rights and responsibilities of parents as the first educators of their children.

1. Schooling acknowledges the capacity of all young Indigenous people to learn by:

1.1 providing a climate that welcomes and values all Indigenous students and has high expectations for their educational outcomes;

1.2 establishing effective teaching/learning relationships between the educator and the Indigenous learner;

1.3 encouraging all Indigenous students to attend school regularly, be actively engaged and to participate in a meaningful and confident manner;

1.4 expecting all Indigenous children to attain a high standard of literacy and numeracy;

1.5 providing a curriculum which:

- (i) allows Indigenous students to share in the same educational opportunities experienced by other Australian students and which allows them to be strong in their own culture and language,
- (ii) supports all students to understand and acknowledge the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to Australian society,
- (iii) supports and builds on the reconciliation process between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians;

1.6 increasing the number of Indigenous people employed within the work place;

1.7 engaging community members and increasing their involvement in the workplace;

2. Schooling acknowledges the role of Indigenous parents/caregivers as the first educators of their children by:

2.1 providing a climate that welcomes Indigenous parents and caregivers as valuable members of the school community and values their input;

2.2 supporting parents and caregivers of Indigenous students in their responsibilities to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

Educational institutions acknowledge the close relationship between quality education, high expectations and a successful contribution to Australian society.



What is a RAP?

The RAP program was launched in July 2006 as a forward looking aspect of the 40th anniversary of the 1967 referendum, the most successful in Australia's history, in which more than 90% of voters said "YES" to equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fellow citizens.

The RAP program turns "good intentions into action" by encouraging and supporting organisations, large and small, to engage within their sphere of influence in the national effort to close the 17-year gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and other Australians.

- A Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is a tool to help your organisation build positive relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.
- RAPs give you a format for exploring how reconciliation can advance your business / organisational objectives.
- RAPs are your public contribution towards the national effort to close the 17-year life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children.
- A RAP formalises your contribution by encouraging you to identify clear actions and realistic targets, as well as lessons learnt.
- While each organisation shapes their own RAP, all plans include a creative blend of relationships, respect and opportunities.
- Developing a meaningful RAP takes time, but the final product is a simple, easy to read plan of no more than five pages.

Why develop a RAP in schools?

A RAP is a simple plan of activities based on building good relationships, respecting the special contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Australia, and working together to ensure Indigenous children have the same life opportunities as other children in this prosperous country.

The important thing about RAPs is that they turn good intentions into actions by asking organisations to identify exactly what contribution they can make to close the 17 year life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children. We ask them to say who's responsible for making it happen, when it will be done and how achievements will be measured.

All kinds of organisations are doing RAPs, from big corporations such as ANZ and Qantas to small businesses, local councils, sporting codes such as the NRL and AFL, hospitals, schools, universities, government departments, and more.

We've formed a special School RAP Program, with a Model School RAP that your school can adopt easily. Read on to learn more about the Model School RAP.

If you would like to learn more about RAPs generally, you might like to read the [RAP Toolkit](#)

NSW Teachers Federation

Annual Aboriginal Education Profile: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy



The NSWTF Annual Aboriginal Education Profile has been developed to assist all educational workplaces and organisations to work through a process from the grassroots level up through to senior management and corporate leadership levels.

The aim of the Annual Aboriginal Education Profile (AAEP) is to assist all educators and their local community to assess what is happening within their workplaces for all students and their communities in Aboriginal education.

This Annual Aboriginal Education Profile will assist and enable workplaces to develop a stronger strategic approach in Aboriginal Education for all students.

This Annual Aboriginal Education Profile will enhance workplaces to further develop and establish an environment that encourages engaged learning and informs all staff and all students about the importance of Aboriginal Identity, Belonging and connection to Country for Aboriginal people, and the engagement and confidence of Aboriginal community.

The Annual Aboriginal Education Profile strategic approach will enhance further engagement to:

- process, re-evaluate and refresh their identified outcomes for Aboriginal students and their communities
- provide a framework for the accountability measures required by federal, state and territory jurisdictions, and Aboriginal communities
- assist individual educational workplace leaders to discuss matters of current concern in Aboriginal education
- discuss NSWTF Aboriginal Education – 25 Years Approach: The Way Forward
- consult widely with all staff members, Aboriginal staff members and especially with their Aboriginal communities before using this AAEP or any of the strategies it suggests
- plan how to use and adapt the AAEP in relation to specific focus on Aboriginal education in individual settings and particular contexts
- develop professional development /in-service activities and cultural immersion courses
- reflect on your workplace achievement in terms of strengthening its Aboriginal Education Policy - 25Years Approach: The Way Forward

A Promise to Our Future Generations Equitable & Quality Public Education

The First Peoples, Aboriginal Australians, *still* remain the most disproportionately disadvantaged Australians.

KEY FOR COMPLETING THE WORKPLACE PROFILE	
Date	Item introduced, discussed or accomplished. Reference point for plans and/or records
Established	Common practice and understood by the workplace
Evolving	In the process, working to establish within the workplace and community
Pledged	Focus area, the workplace will address next

All communities and workplaces may reproduce and adapt this document for their specific needs.

Aboriginal Education Profile adapted by NSWTF AMC & AERC Committees from Dare to Lead 2010.

1. Acknowledge and Celebrate

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Acknowledging and celebrating Aboriginal Australia
				a. Our workplace flies the Aboriginal flag.
				b. Our workplace flies the Torres Strait Islander flag.
				c. Our workplace Acknowledges and/or Welcomes People and Country at our assemblies.
				d. Our library includes up-to-date resources of Aboriginal material, available to all staff and community.
				e. Our workplace Acknowledges and celebrates dates significant in Aboriginal history and culture e.g. National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week, Sorry Day etc.
				f. Our workplace invites our Elders to Welcome visitors to Country at significant events.
				g. Aboriginal people visit our workplace to share their experiences and or storytelling.
				h. Our workplace provides the opportunity for children to learn traditional and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance, music and art.
				i. Our workplace has a dedicated Aboriginal Education cultural community room and or cultural space for members to gather for meetings with staff and students.
				j. Our workplace has examples of both traditional and contemporary Aboriginal cultural artefacts on display.
				k. Our workplace has local Aboriginal murals in the workplace.

2. Connecting with Community

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Building and sustaining community workplace partnerships
				a. Classroom teachers meet with their Aboriginal students' parents.
				b. Meetings with Aboriginal parents are held in a place comfortable for both staff and parents.
				c. Our workplace has an Aboriginal Education Committee with representation from students, staff, and community.
				d. Our workplace provides training and development opportunities for Aboriginal parents and community members.
				e. Our workplace makes connections with local Elders and where appropriate will develop an Elders Group.
				f. Our workplace is involved in activities within the Aboriginal community.
				g. Our workplace has Aboriginal members in our workplace Parents and Citizens organisation or equivalent.
				h. Our workplace has representation at our local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and we will investigate to develop a Junior AECG.

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Aboriginal Education Profile adapted by NSWTF AMC & AERC Committees from Dare to Lead 2010.

3. Individual Student Needs

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Meeting our students' needs
				a. Our workplace tracks the literacy and numeracy outcomes of our Aboriginal students.
				b. Our workplace has an adult Aboriginal presence in our classrooms, such as Aboriginal Education Workers, working in partnership with teachers within the classroom.
				c. Our workplace uses a wide range of culturally diverse and appropriate Aboriginal teaching and learning materials.
				d. Aboriginal authors and themes are well represented in our teaching resources and curriculum implementation.
				e. Teachers know who their Aboriginal students are, and understand the importance of their identity and family connections.
				f. Our workplace uses the model of in-class tuition/support to assist students below national benchmarks.
				g. Teachers are aware of the individual learning needs and strengths of their Aboriginal students. They demonstrate this in their planning and teaching strategies. They have developed a variety of teaching strategies in order to give students access to other learning styles.
				h. Our workplace is providing appropriate literacy support that will result in accelerated outcomes for individual Aboriginal students.
				i. Quality education programs are in place to support Aboriginal students in their pre-working years.
				j. Our workplace provides intensive individual career skills development and counselling for Aboriginal students.
				k. Our workplace has Primary Personalised Learning Pathway (PPLP) for all primary Aboriginal students, Secondary Personalised Learning Career Pathway (SPLCP) for all secondary students and TAFE Personalised Learning Career Pathway (TPLCP) for all TAFE students.
				l. Aboriginal students are represented in our Gifted and Talented programs.
				m. Our workplace has medical screening for Aboriginal students. Otitis Media is addressed at an early stage in a student's life and attention to proper medical care continues throughout schooling.
				n. Classrooms are set up for instruction of hearing impaired children. Children with such needs have appropriate technology.
				o. Aboriginal students have equal access to the <i>Reading Recovery</i> program.
				p. Our workplace celebrates Aboriginal student learning successes.
				q. Our workplace tracks our mobile/transient students and provide receiving workplaces with appropriate information to ensure continuity of education programs.
				r. Our workplace accesses the Indigenous Tutoring Assistance Scheme.

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Aboriginal Education Profile adapted by NSWTF AMC & AERC Committees from Dare to Lead 2010.

4. Strategic Planning

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Planning our teaching and learning
				a. Our workplace has an Aboriginal Education Strategic Plan within our overall management plan.
				b. Our workplace has an Aboriginal perspective in all curriculum areas.
				c. Our workplace curriculum scope and sequence includes mandatory units based on both traditional and contemporary Aboriginal history and cultures.
				d. We run a series of transition programs for Aboriginal students. For example, 0-4 Programs, Pre school–School, Years 2–3, Years 6–7, Years 10–12.
				e. Our workplace investigates and establishes, with local Aboriginal community, an Aboriginal Language program.
				f. Our workplace has embedded Aboriginal perspectives across all KLAS.
				g. Teachers develop appropriate programs of work adapted to meet the individual needs of students.
				h. Our workplace has established a functioning Aboriginal Education Committee.
				i. Our workplace develops interagency connections and relationships.
				j. Our workplace has effectively implemented the Aboriginal education Policy.
				k. Our workplace offers Aboriginal Education as a subject choice in Stages 5 & 6.

5. Setting High Expectations

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Setting high expectations in our teaching and student learning
				a. Teachers demonstrate a consistently high expectation of Aboriginal students.
				b. Our workplace has open discussions with Aboriginal parents and community members to establish shared expectations of the teaching and learning focus of the classroom.
				c. Students themselves have high expectations and are challenged by the curriculum.
				d. Our workplace has a specific targeted engagement program in place for Aboriginal students that can be measured through improved attendance.
				e. Our workplace provides leadership opportunities for our Aboriginal students.
				f. Our workplace has an orientation program for prospective Aboriginal kinder/reception/pre-workplace enrolments.
				g. Our workplace has narrowed the achievement gap between Aboriginal students and non-Aboriginal students in literacy and numeracy.
				h. Our workplace tracks the retention of Aboriginal students across transition periods.

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Aboriginal Education Profile adapted by NSWTF AMC & AERC Committees from Dare to Lead 2010.

5. Setting High Expectations (continued from previous page...)

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Setting high expectations in our teaching and student learning
				i. Teachers challenge individual students with programs that build on students' prior knowledge.
				j. Our workplace provides opportunity for Aboriginal community members to access a range of experiences, library skills, CV writing skills, develop meeting procedures.

6. Cultural Based Experience

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Promoting cultural understanding
				a. Our workplace provides cultural competence training for all new staff members as part of their induction.
				b. All staff undertake regular Aboriginal cultural training and development provided by the DET.
				c. Our workplace knows what traditional Aboriginal land our workplace was built upon.
				d. Our workplace has a naming plaque erected which identifies the traditional Aboriginal land our workplace stands upon.
				e. Our workplace knows the local traditional nation and language names and which Indigenous groups traditionally inhabited our local area.
				f. All students study units of work on local history and cultures of Aboriginal peoples.
				g. Our workplace has invited local Elders to talk to staff about local history and cultures.
				h. Our workplace participates in Reconciliation Week activities.
				i. Our workplace promotes and participates in celebrating the National Apology Anniversary.

7. Employment

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Our workplace employs Aboriginal staff.
				a. Local Aboriginal community members are offered opportunities to work in our workplace.
				b. Our workplace has an Aboriginal employee in our front office.
				c. Our workplace has an Aboriginal teacher/s on staff.
				d. Our workplace employs Aboriginal staff to work in non-designated positions.
				e. All Aboriginal Education staff are provided with training and support on the same basis as other staff.
				f. Our workplace investigates and promotes opportunity for Aboriginal traineeships, work placement and work experience.

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Aboriginal Education Profile adapted by NSWTF AMC & AERC Committees from Dare to Lead 2010.

8. Leadership

Date	Estab-lished	Evolving	Pledged	Leading the Way through example
				a. Our workplace has an Aboriginal Education Committee that guides decision-making about Aboriginal education matters within our workplace. The local community is represented on this committee.
				b. The needs of Aboriginal students are reflected in our school / institute & faculty / stage plans.
				c. Our workplace leaders and teachers have formed authentic relationships with Aboriginal workers and the local community.
				d. Our workplace is an active member of the <i>Dare to Lead</i> coalition.
				e. Our workplace has worked through the <i>What Works</i> program.
				f. Our workplace has developed partnerships with other inter-agencies that work with the Aboriginal community.
				g. Our workplace has a strong and transparent anti-racism policy in action.
				h. Meetings are held between staff and the Aboriginal community.
				i. Aboriginal education has a priority in our management plan.
				j. Aboriginal education issues are regular items on our staff meeting agenda.
				k. <i>The APAPDC (Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council) School Leadership frame: an Indigenous focus</i> booklet and other appropriate leadership materials will be investigated and discussed by our staff.
				l. Our workplace has established a cultural awareness program for staff, students and community members around protocols and skills-based needs for our workplace environment.

9. Mentors

Date	Estab-lished	Evolving	Pledged	Encouraging mentors and models
				a. Our workplace has post-tracked our Aboriginal graduates into the workplace, tertiary education or the workforce.
				b. Our workplace invites successful ex students and community members to mentor and motivate our current students.
				c. Our workplace has used the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) Ambassador's Program.
				d. Our workplace has engaged the local Aboriginal community to provide local role models and mentors for students.

10. Successes and wellbeing

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Promoting success and wellbeing
				a. Our workplace promotes a healthy lifestyle and implements policies that support the health and physical education curriculum e.g. through <i>Healthy Canteen</i> policies.
				b. Our workplace addresses local health priorities through relevant cohesive harm minimising health education curricula e.g. drug education, road safety, sexual health, mental health, protective behaviours, nutrition, etc.
				c. Health and wellbeing education is supported by culturally appropriate resources.
				d. Our workplace promotes a positive environment that supports inclusivity and the building of student resilience through implementation of programs such as <i>Mind Matters</i> .
				e. Our workplace has a regular physical activity/sport program.
				f. Our staff attend regular professional development in health and wellbeing.
				g. Our workplace has a Health and Wellbeing Education Committee with representation from parents and other relevant community members such as Aboriginal Police Liaison Officers, local Elders and Aboriginal Health Workers.
				h. Our workplace has established effective links with community agencies that support student health and wellbeing e.g. screening and immunisation programs and mental health services.
				i. Culture and identity are recognised as significant in the mental health and wellbeing of our Aboriginal students, staff and community.
				j. Our workplace develops opportunities for Aboriginal students and staff to feel connected to our workplace.

11. Innovative Projects, Programs and Resources

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Programs and Resources
				a. Our workplace has accessed the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) Ambassador's program.
				b. Our Aboriginal students have equal access to the <i>Reading Recovery</i> program.
				c. Our workplace has visited and engaged in the Aboriginal Programs Unit website (state and sector-based).
				d. Our workplace develops individual and community programs that address our local needs.

12. Interagency Connection & Involvement

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Working with other stakeholders
				a. Our workplace has investigated and connected with Reconciliation NSW and Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR).
				b. Our workplace collaborates with our local Council, Health, Police, and DOCs.

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13. Analysis - 25Year Approach: The Way Forward

Date	Estab- lished	Evolving	Pledged	Reflections and Review

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Aboriginal Education Profile

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy

Your Workplace:

Date:

1. Acknowledge & Celebrate				
Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Acknowledging and celebrating Aboriginal Australia
2. Connecting with Community				
Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Building and sustaining community workplace partnerships
3. Individual Student Needs				
Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Meeting our students' needs

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4. Strategic Planning

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Planning our teaching and learning

5. Setting High Expectations

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Setting high expectations in our teaching and student learning

6. Cultural Based Experience

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Promoting cultural understanding

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7. Employment

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Employment of Aboriginal staff

8. Leadership

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Leading the Way through example

9. Mentors

Date	Established	Evolving	Pledged	Encouraging mentors and models

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