

Walking Together, Working Together

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE
NSW ABORIGINAL EDUCATION
CONSULTATIVE GROUP INC
AND THE
NSW DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

2020-2030



New South Wales
Aboriginal Education
Consultative Group Inc.





The NSW Department of Education values our ongoing partnership with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated (NSW AECG) and is committed to continuing to strengthen this relationship. We recognise the NSW AECG as the peak community advisory body to the department on Aboriginal education at all levels and in all stages of planning and decision making.

Our renewed partnership focuses on a strength-based approach. The department is committed to respectfully listening and learning from the NSW AECG, and its network of Regional and Local AECGs. We are proud of the foundation of trust that underlies our relationship and we will work together, and take our next steps, in a genuine and equal partnership. Together we will strengthen collaboration between Aboriginal communities and schools, together we will work towards common goals in Aboriginal education, and together we will celebrate the successes of our students and communities.

The Department and the NSW AECG are accountable to one another as we work to ensure that our students achieve their full potential academically, and as we embrace and foster their social, emotional, spiritual and cultural needs throughout their individual journeys.

We will work together to provide all staff and students with an understanding and appreciation of the richness and diversity of Aboriginal cultures and histories. The department recognises and values the support of the NSW AECG's community base with this work. We know that by improving knowledge and understanding and by listening to Aboriginal voices we will be helping to build school environments that are culturally safe, where racism is eliminated and that are great places to work and to learn.

In Education we know that every child deserves to be known, valued and cared for at school and we are serious about our purpose of preparing young people for rewarding lives as engaged citizens in a complex and dynamic society. I look forward to the department and the NSW AECG Walking Together, Working Together to meet those ambitions.

Mark Scott AO
Secretary,
NSW Department of Education

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Scott".

It is with a sense of optimism and hope that the NSW AECG enters into a renewed Partnership Agreement with the NSW Department of Education.

We are optimistic that we can continue to build on the successes that we have achieved to date that ensure our people have access and opportunities in the education system, by continuing to work respectfully and collaboratively with the NSW Department of Education.

We are hopeful that the disparities and inequities that exist for our children in gaining an education are a priority for the Department and the pockets of racism that exist in all its forms are challenged.

The NSW AECG, through its local and regional network promotes respect, empowerment and self-determination and believes the process of collaborative consultation is integral to equal partnerships and is fundamental to the achievement of equality.

The NSW AECG was born from an education movement that advocates the right to access and participate in an education system. The Partnership Agreement outlines how we will achieve this and our shared responsibilities.

By Walking Together, Working Together, we look to a future, a future that builds a nation founded on tolerance, respect and understandings of the unique place of its First Nations People. A future laid by the foundation of an education system that celebrates and recognises that we are the oldest living culture of humanity.

Cindy Berwick
President,
NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C Berwick".

The artwork was inspired by the 2020-2030 Partnership Agreement theme of '*Working Together, Walking Together*'. We are all unique, come from different walks of life and in partnership we can work towards achieving a bright and colourful future for our students.

Artwork and graphic design by Wallula Bethell





What we agree

The NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc (NSW AECG) and the NSW Department of Education (the department) agree to use our best endeavours to ensure that every Aboriginal child and young person in NSW achieves their potential through education.

The outcomes we will achieve by working together

The educational outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people will be as good as or better than those of the general student population of New South Wales.

On completion of school, Aboriginal young people will confidently express and demonstrate their knowledge of the cultures of their own Peoples as well as their achievement of western education.

How will we do this

The NSW AECG will support these endeavours by providing appropriate cultural and community knowledge and understandings to teachers and other education staff through professional learning.

The NSW AECG will work with the department on the development and implementation of educational policies and programs and will facilitate consultations with Communities and Elders and knowledge holders to achieve these aims.

What we will see

- Aboriginal children will access early childhood education prior to school.
- The achievements of Aboriginal young people at school will give them a pathway into higher education, further training and/or sustainable employment.
- Aboriginal children and young people will become proficient in the language of their Country/Culture or of others (with permission).
- Schools will demonstrate that they value the identity, culture, heritage and languages of their Aboriginal students.
- Staff will demonstrate that they respect the identity, culture, heritage and languages of their Aboriginal students.
- Staff will demonstrate that they believe the parents of Aboriginal students have high aspirations for their children; and that they believe the Aboriginal students they teach are able to achieve their aspirations.
- The department will demonstrate that the NSW AECG is its peak advisory body for the education of Aboriginal Peoples in New South Wales by
 - o always consulting with the NSW AECG first on all matters related to the education of Aboriginal school children.
 - o always working with the NSW AECG in developing and implementing policy and programs for the education of Aboriginal students.
- The department will work with the NSW AECG to ensure effective consultation occurs with Communities at the local level, in acknowledgement of the AECG's grassroots structure.
- The Partnership Agreement will provide the foundation for the development of School Plans.
- On the path to achieving these goals, the department will build the Premier's Priorities for the education of Aboriginal students into the system.

How we will monitor and report our achievements

The NSW Department of Education and the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group will report on the progress of this Partnership Agreement each year. To do this, we will develop and implement a monitoring framework, with interim goals, together.





What parents and Communities will experience

By Walking Together and Working Together, the NSW Department of Education and the NSW AECG will work towards delivering these outcomes during the life of this Partnership Agreement.

Early Childhood

- All Aboriginal children in NSW Public School preschools complete a culturally safe pre-school education.
- All Aboriginal children are well-prepared for school.

Schools

- Parents and carers of Aboriginal children will find schools welcoming and respectful places.
- Aboriginal languages are part of every school and pre-school curriculum.
- Technology allows children and young people to learn the Language or Languages of their Peoples, wherever they live.
- Aboriginal children and young people are equally represented in achieving a HSC with an ATAR at the same level or better than the whole population of their peers.
- Aboriginal children and young people are equally represented in gaining places in further education at the same level or better than the whole population of their peers.

Aboriginal Students

- Aboriginal students find schools to be engaging, culturally safe places to learn.
- Aboriginal students believe that they can succeed at school and they do succeed.
- Aboriginal students are confident in their heritage, cultures and languages.

Non-Aboriginal Students

- Every student in NSW understands the heritage and culture of the Aboriginal Peoples on whose land/s they live.
- Every student in NSW leaves school with an understanding of Aboriginal heritage and culture and the history of the interaction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.

Teachers

- All teachers have completed Aboriginal cultural awareness training, with refresher courses every three years.
- All teachers demonstrate that they understand Aboriginal parents/families have high expectations for their children and all teachers work in collaboration with parents/caregivers and communities to ensure Aboriginal students achieve these expectations.

Other Staff

- Senior positions have been identified and created for Aboriginal educational leaders across a wide range of levels of the department.
 - Panels established for the recruitment and selection processes in education have a representative of Aboriginal Peoples through the inclusion of a representative of the NSW AECG.
 - All non-teaching staff complete Aboriginal cultural awareness training, with refresher courses every three years.
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