This is the published version:


Available from Deakin Research Online:

http://hdl.handle.net/10536/DRO/DU:30074039

Reproduced with the kind permission of the copyright owner.

Copyright: 2015, State of Victoria, Department of Education and Training
Leading Indigenous Cultural Inclusion

2014 Program Evaluation Report
Contents

Overview ..................................................................................................................................................5
Achievement of program goals ...............................................................................................................8
Data analysis and findings .....................................................................................................................10
Day 1 and 2 ............................................................................................................................................10
Day 3 and 4 ............................................................................................................................................13
Day 5 .....................................................................................................................................................15
Program strengths and weaknesses .......................................................................................................17
Recommendations ....................................................................................................................................18
Appendix 1 – Action plans .....................................................................................................................19
Appendix 2 - Participant reflections .......................................................................................................88
Overview

The Leading Indigenous Cultural Inclusion aims to support improvements in the learning outcomes and wellbeing of Aboriginal students by providing principals and school leaders with the understanding, skills and strategies to create and sustain school environments which support inclusion, engagement and achievement of Indigenous students.

Participants

Participants of the course were challenged to develop appropriate strategies, in consultation with their local communities, for incorporating culturally inclusive practices into day-to-day school operations and whole-school curriculum provision.

The course was delivered between August and November 2014 and was attended by a total of 27 participants which included 20 principals and/or teachers from 11 schools as well DET Central/Regional Office personnel. Of the 11 schools represented, 5 were represented by school teams of two or more. The remaining 6 schools were represented by individual principals or teachers. The locations and roles of the participants are outlined in Table 1. The locations of the 11 schools is depicted in Figure 1.

Table 1: LICI participant locations and roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>School or DET Location</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NORTH-EASTERN VICTORIA</td>
<td>Badger Creek</td>
<td>Student wellbeing officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Katandra West Primary School</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mcguire College</td>
<td>Acting Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NEV Region</td>
<td>KEC-Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NEV Region</td>
<td>Regional Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NEV Region</td>
<td>Regional Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wanganui Park Secondary College</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NEV Region</td>
<td>KEC-Metro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH-WESTERN VICTORIA</td>
<td>Charles La Trobe P-12 College – Pavilion East</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kyabram P-12 College</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charles La Trobe P-12 College – Pavilion East</td>
<td>Leading Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Northern Bay P-12 College</td>
<td>Koorie coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newhaven Primary School</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newhaven Primary School</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peninsula Specialist College</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peninsula Specialist College</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peninsula Specialist College</td>
<td>Education Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peninsula Specialist College</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SEV Region</td>
<td>Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH-EASTERN VICTORIA</td>
<td>Drouin Primary School</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drouin Primary School</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newhaven Primary School</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peninsula Specialist College</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peninsula Specialist College</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Point Lonsdale Primary School</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEECD CENTRAL OFFICE</td>
<td>Cohort Strategy</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Koorie Unit</td>
<td>Senior Project Officer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program structure

The program was delivered over 5 days which included four whole-cohort, face-to-face workshops, and one school based day. The first two days were held consecutively as a residential retreat at the Institute of Koorie Education (IKE), Deakin University, Geelong. This was followed around one month later with a day at the Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership. The ‘fourth day’ consisted of school and workplace visits by the members of the Deakin team to support the development of participants’ action plans in the local context. On the final day held at Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre, Melbourne Museum the participants shared their action plan and learning from the course. The program structure and content is depicted in Table 2

Table 2: Program structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residential Retreat – Institute of Koorie Education</th>
<th>Bastow Workshops</th>
<th>School Visits</th>
<th>Bunjilaka workshops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day 1 – Introduction to Indigenous culture</td>
<td>Day 2 - Indigenous cultural awareness – planning a more culturally inclusive school</td>
<td>Day 3 - Building leadership skills to cater for Indigenous learners</td>
<td>Day 4 – School Visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 August</td>
<td>19 August</td>
<td>15 September</td>
<td>6 -17 October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Acknowledgement to Country</td>
<td>▪ Acknowledgement to Country</td>
<td>▪ Acknowledgement to country</td>
<td>▪ Visits to schools leaders by Deakin team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Introduction to culture and identity</td>
<td>▪ Tour of the Institute of Koorie Education</td>
<td>▪ Understanding leadership frameworks</td>
<td>▪ Acknowledgement to country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Pre-Colonial culture</td>
<td>▪ Teaching Aboriginal learners: A look at the Victorian context</td>
<td>▪ Exploring resources for whole school buy-in</td>
<td>▪ Sharing action plans and workplace contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Aboriginal identity: Post-Colonial culture and the community today</td>
<td>▪ Development of action plans</td>
<td>▪ Development of action plans</td>
<td>▪ Tour of Bunjilaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Sharing of action plans and individual reflections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course development and facilitation

The course was developed by Deakin University through a collaboration between the Institute of Koorie Education and the School of Education. The Deakin staff involved in the development and presentation of the course were: Professor Brian Martin, Ms Rachelle McIvor and Ms Karen Lovett from (Institute of Koorie Education), Professor Brenda Cherdenichenko, Dr Glenn Auld and Ms Julie Dyer (School of Education).

Course content was reviewed and approved by the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. (VAEAI).

Bastow307 was used as the learning management system for the course and this served as a repository for many resources utilised by participants. Participants were provided with online and telephone support as required.
Achievement of program goals

The key goal of the Leading Indigenous Cultural Inclusion program was for participants to develop an action plan to support them to lead change in their schools to improve outcomes for Indigenous students. The actions plans of participants are provided in Appendix 1 as evidence of achievement of this leading change goal. The leading change goal was inter-dependent on three other program goals as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Interdependence of Program goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leading change: Participants will understand and develop an action plan, utilising existing resources, to create or strengthen and sustain organisational conditions in their school which support inclusion of Indigenous students and their families.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Theory and practice goal: Participants will understand current theories, pedagogies, and approaches for improving Indigenous student learning outcomes and wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understanding conditions: Participants will understand, based on evidence, the conditions that support participation and engagement of Indigenous learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Leading conversations: Participants will lead initiatives and/or substantive conversations to increase understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages within their school communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following findings for each goal were drawn from participant surveys, action plans and individual reflection.

Theory and practice goal

Participants will understand current theories, pedagogies, and approaches for improving Indigenous student learning outcomes and wellbeing.

Findings:

In relation to the content of the Day 1 sessions that were based on understanding Indigenous cultural knowledge, 80% of the participants found the content 'very useful'. These ideas were further explored in Day 2 where a participant reflected ‘I was able to imagine what life would be like, and the concept of reconciliation was clear- we need to create the balance again.’ This reflection highlights the personal impact of the learning. Another participant’s comments after Day 4 provided evidence of this personal learning:

‘I felt my knowledge was confirmed and extended.’

Understanding conditions goal

Participants will understand, based on evidence, the conditions that support participation and engagement of Indigenous learners
Findings:

90% of the participants found understanding the Victorian Aboriginal context on Day 2 either ‘quite useful’ or ‘very useful. All of the participants agreed strongly or agreed to some extent that their understandings of the issues had increased at the end of Day 4. Participants demonstrated understandings of conditions that support participation and engagement of Indigenous learners in their action plan. Understandings of partnership, accountability, respect, leadership and families were shared by DET action plan. Participants from the Pavillion School shared strategies for planning active, purposeful and meaningful events to facilitate collaboration between staff, students and community.

**Leading conversations goal**

Participants will lead initiatives and/or substantive conversations to increase understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages within their school communities

Findings:

The opportunity for the participants to dialogue about the leadership needs in their local context was a highlight of the learning for many participants. One participant commented: ‘This has been a great opportunity as a Senior Adviser to come together with a team of people to tackle a large project across Greater Shepparton’ (Participant reflection after Day 4). Another participant identified the importance of beginning to talk about inclusion: ‘The course provides a great opportunity to begin a conversation about inclusion.’ The action plan from the participants in Newhaven Primary School identified the importance in having some of this dialogue happening in an Aboriginal language.

‘A Boon Wurrung elder taught grade 3/4s some Boon Wurrung language and spoke about their traditions” (Presentation of Newhaven Primary School Action Plan). Staff at Kyabram P-12 College led important conversations with their staff to identify where they could contribute to the action plan so the Action Plan Working Group has strong support from both community and staff.

**Leading change goal**

Participants will understand and develop an action plan, utilising existing resources, to create or strengthen and sustain organisational conditions in their school which support inclusion of Indigenous students and their families.

Findings:

An important result of this module was that 88% of participants found the action planning advice either very useful or extremely useful. The participants found the action planning a changing process, being reflective of a range of contextual factors. As one participant said, ‘My plan is changing with each step we take but that is a good thing’ (Participant reflection after Day 4). As part of the action plan, one school has introduced ‘Koorie Action Group meetings each term with a number of parents and staff in attendance’ to be inclusive and responsive to Koorie parents and caregivers (Presentation of Wanganui Park Secondary College Action Plan).
Data analysis and findings

The two participant surveys after Day 2 and Day 4 provided facilitators with opportunities to adjust the program to suit the needs of the participants.

Day 1 and 2

Perceived usefulness

The charts below show participants’ ranking of the usefulness of the following Day 1 and 2 sessions:

Day 1
- Welcome/acknowledgement
- protocols Introduction to identity and culture
- Pre-colonial culture
- Post-colonial culture
- The community today and the Dinner presentation

Day 2
- Tour of the Institute
- Table group feedback on tour and readings,
- the Victorian context,
- VAEAI
- Action plans focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome/acknowledgement</td>
<td>Tour of the Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to identity and culture</td>
<td>Table group feedback on tour and readings,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-colonial culture</td>
<td>the Victorian context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-colonial culture</td>
<td>VAEAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The community today and the Dinner presentation</td>
<td>Action plans focus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between 75 and 85 per-cent of participants considered the content of Day 1 to be very useful. In comparison, the content of Day 2 was considered very useful by between 45 and 55 per-cent of participants. Of the day 2 sessions the most highly ranged session component was on Action plans with 55 per-cent of participants viewing it as very useful.
Time allocations

The chart at right shows participants’ views on the amount of time allocated to the following:

- Delivery and explanation of key content
- Table group discussion
- Discussion with participants from similar schools or school with similar needs and
- Reading.

The time allowed for delivery/explanation of key content and for reading was considered appropriate by 85 per cent and 75 per cent of participants respectively. The time for discussion with similar schools was considered insufficient by 70 per cent of participants.

Participant priorities for further discussion

The chart at right shows participants’ ranking of priorities for further discussion:

- Identity and culture;
- The community today;
- Racism and discrimination;
- VAEAI;
- Action planning

Identity and culture, action planning and the community today, were ranked as the highest priority for further discussion by 40 per cent, 35 per cent and 25 per cent of participants respectively.
Networking and collaboration

The chart below reflects participants’ level of agreement with the following statements:

- Sufficient opportunities were available for networking and informal discussion
- Informal discussions (over lunch, dinner etc.) were useful in building my understanding
- The program structure and environment was conducive to establishing new, or strengthening existing professional relationships.

Around 80 per cent of participants considered the structure and environment to be conducive to establishing new or strengthening existing professional relationships.
Day 3 and 4

Perceived usefulness

The chart at right shows participants' perception of the usefulness of following day 3 sessions at Bastow:

- Introductory leadership scenario
- Leadership discussions informed by the AITSL Framework
- Readings
- Action planning discussions
- Action planning advice

Day 3 sessions which focused on Action planning and the Readings were generally perceived to be more useful than sessions focussed on leadership. 88 per cent of participants felt that Action planning advice and discussion were extremely useful.

Impact on action plans

The chart at right indicates the level of agreement by participants to the following statements as a result of their participation in Day 3:

- My action plan is more clearly defined
- My understanding of the issues has increased
- I have a clearer sense of the next steps for implementation of my action plan

53 per cent of participants strongly agreed that their understanding of the issues had increased through their participation in Day 3. Less than 35 per cent of participants strongly agreed that the clarity of their action plan had increased.
Understanding and confidence to engage with community

The chart below provides the level of participant agreement to the following statements:

- My understanding of the local Indigenous community has increased.
- My capacity for engagement with the local Indigenous community has increased.
- The level of support for the action plan in the school has increased.
- My confidence to implement the action plan has increased.

Although 63 per cent of participants agreed to some extent, that their capacity for engagement with the local community had increased, only 13 per cent of participants strongly agreed. Around 25 per cent of participants strongly agreed that the level of support in the school and their confidence to implement the action plan had increased.
Day 5

Themes from Action plans

On Day 5 participants shared their action plans. A total of nine action plans were shared. These ranged from System level action plans to the highly contextualised school based action plans, the latter forming the majority of the presentations.

Each school was asked to develop an action plan using the Reconciliation Action Plan template.

Building Relationships.

All action plans recognised the importance of working with the community and building relationships with local elders and community members. For some schools this involved finding out who the elders were in their school and making contact with them. For other schools it was building on existing relationships through targeted programs such as invitations to events organised by the school. Building both the school and communities' confidence to work together was seen as a key indicator for all action plans.

All action plans reflected the need to shift towards a collaborative partnership with community as well as within school structures. This was seen in striving to set up an action plan committee with representation of local community or school members. This meant goals to develop greater links with KESOs in their schools.

Aboriginal Cultural Spaces

Some schools were challenged by the absence in their school grounds of a culturally safe place for Aboriginal students. The school visit on Day 4 highlighted areas in and outside of the school that were planned or nominated to develop into such spaces. These spaces were seen as pivotal to the comfort of Aboriginal students. The action plans reflected the building of spaces or the prioritising of these spaces more in the school. Examples of spaces include a Koorie room, an Indigenous garden, a dedicated room, and the creation of an Indigenous space. Where spaces were established and working there was an observed comfort felt by Aboriginal students.

This also meant that schools should ensure that the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander flag is flown in the school alongside the Australian flag.

L-R: Peninsula Specialist School’s Koorie Room, The Pavilion School’s space identified for future Indigenous space.
Culturally Inclusive curriculum

Schools were encouraged to focus on reviewing the curriculum at the school. For the Shepparton network of schools this meant the development of a First Nations curriculum for all schools in the network, accompanied by a professional learning program for staff. For another school it meant revising the history of the school to include Aboriginal place history and its importance to wider Victorian history.

Developing a culturally inclusive curriculum is seen as valuing the Aboriginal perspectives, auditing school library resources, including the Koorie mail in the library, noticeboards that feature culturally inclusive activities, and inviting in local elders to give their stories.

Targeted support for Aboriginal students

School action plans described are wide range of supports/ activities to promote inclusion including: the work of KESO, elders, staff, Year 12 BBQ for students as well as designated leadership positions. Goals specifically related to day-to-day practices to support inclusion of Aboriginal students both culturally and academically. Greater awareness of staff and other students towards Aboriginal students in schools was a common feature of the plans.

Themes from the individual reflections

Five of the participants provided individual reflections on their experiences in leading Indigenous cultural inclusion. While the context of their learning is diverse, the following themes emerged in their reflections.

Confirmation of doing things well already begun such as learning stones, introduction of Aboriginal languages at school and the decolonisation

Several participants reflected that the course gave them feedback on how there were on the right path. They looked back at initiatives they had of school practices by non-Aboriginal teachers.

Recognition of new learning

All participants identified the new learning they experienced as part of the course. These included the impact of the learning spaces in the Institute of Koorie Education, the letting go of control to give Aboriginal students a stronger say in the school operations, the understanding of the impact of welcome to country and the understandings of Aboriginal ways of knowing. One participant identified how this new learning was taken into the classroom where the students negotiated a deeper understanding of colonisation than the participant teacher had previously presented in his history classes.

Importance of relationships

All the participants commented on learning about the importance of relationships in this domain of leading. One participant outlined the fact that relationships are nuanced and representation from all Aboriginal families in the community was an important understanding he took from the course. Another participant identified how engagement of students and the Aboriginal community is an important aspect of closing the gap initiatives.

“I have gained a different perspective on Australian history, specifically in regards to colonisation and the events that have unfolded since. I have been inspired and encouraged to discuss this history with my students and my own children, so they can better understand how the past has shaped the present. Furthermore, I have a more informed opinion on why more accurate indigenous history should be included in the curriculum.”
Program strengths and weaknesses

Program strengths

The design of the program provided participants with a highly relevant practical outcome for their school where they could explore the complexities of leading Indigenous cultural inclusion in their specific context. The participants were provided with important contextually appropriate strategies for developing their action plan during the site visits to their school or workplace.

The delivery of the program had a strong place-based emphasis where the participants were immersed in spaces that were designed by Aboriginal people such as the Institute of Koorie Education and the Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre. For some participants this reinforced their culturally safe initiatives in school, while for other participants the learning in these spaces prompted important conversations about ownership and belonging in schools and workplaces.

Throughout the course participants were shown a respectful partnership between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal facilitators in the program. The participants could draw on the strengths of this partnership throughout the course. This partnership strategy was modelled to the participants and their colleagues in their workplace or school during site visits on Day 4.

The participants were challenged to evaluate their understandings of the true history of the place on which their school or workplace is located. While they were provided with statistics and historical recounts of Aboriginal experiences, they were also given a moving lived experience by Karen Lovett, one of the facilitators, at the end of Day 1. ‘Karen’s presentation of her life story that we heard over dinner was not only very moving but also very inspiring’ (Individual participant reflection)

Program weakness

There is some weakness in the program worth noting in this report. One area of program weakness involved the structural elements of the program. The role of the reference group advising the department appeared to change over the life of the project. The roles of the facilitators changed over the life of the program as well which made communication difficult for the project manager in the DEECD. There were some issues with the uncertainty surrounding the ownership of the intellectual property of the cultural resources presented in day 1 and day 2 of the program.

Another weakness of the program was the limited time the participants had to devote to the course. The practical and relational components of the program resonated with the participants. The limited reading completed by the participants, however, meant much of the understandings about leadership and cultural inclusion were not drawn from evidence based research.

Another weakness of the program was the changing policy context through the life of the program. The program was delivered between the Wannik and Garrin Garrin policy. This meant the program was not framed by the facilitators with DEECD policy, although on Day 5 the elements of Garrin Garrin were shared with the facilitators.
Recommendations

The fundamental premise of the LICI module is that effective change for Indigenous students and families requires partnerships and the LICI module itself was developed through strong collaborative partnerships between University, government, local indigenous organisations and community. This practice of collaboration strengthened the capacity of the module to effectively deliver on the goals of the program.

Recommendation: 1

That future delivery of programs to promote Indigenous cultural inclusion are underpinned by a collaborative module of design delivery

Recommendation 2

That the Department builds on the outcomes from the LICI module to extend the reach of such a program to other government schools.

Recommendation 3

That the LICI program be used to illustrate the current education policy Garrin Garrin. This Program provides a great opportunity to potentially integrate Garrin Garrin into school action plans in the school and within the community.

Totems decorated by students and Peninsula Specialist College
Appendix 1 – Action plans
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Whole of life-course provision for all

Early Childhood Development

Birth to 8
400,000 children and families

School Education

5 to 18
880,000 students

Higher Education and Skills

15 to 65+
895,000 learners
Challenges in enhancing outcomes for Koorie people - some examples

Boosting Koorie children’s learning and wellbeing in the early years ...

Figure 3: Percentage of children assessed as developmentally vulnerable, 2009 and 2012

Source: AEDI National Report 2012, p27, Commonwealth of Australia
Challenges in enhancing outcomes for Koorie people - some examples

Boosting core skills in literacy and numeracy ...

**Figure 4: Average mean scores in NAPLAN 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Koorie</th>
<th>Non-Koorie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>586</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: ACARA, National Assessment Program, National Report for 2013*
Enhancing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians

The foundations of system-wide improvement

- Committed and courageous leadership
- Respect and recognition
- Culturally accessible and responsive services
- Strong and resilient families
- A skilled workforce
- Partnership at the local level
- Robust accountability

Early Childhood Development  School Education  Higher Education and Skills
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend the Launch/Forum of ‘Six Generations Yarning Together’.</td>
<td>Principal (Brad)</td>
<td>7th October</td>
<td>Begin to create links with members of the wider Kurnai community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with KESO team to put together letter of invitation for morning tea.</td>
<td>Brad/Janelle/Jane KESO Team (Rex and Terry)</td>
<td>10th October</td>
<td>A letter is to be sent to all current parents/carers of our Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing External relationships. Facilitate meeting with members of Kurnai Nations Company.</td>
<td>Brad/Janelle/Jane</td>
<td>By end of Term 4 2014</td>
<td>Begin to have conversations with members of Kurnai Nations Company. Discuss our involvement with ‘Leading Indigenous Cultural Inclusion’ and to discuss our intentions of a welcome morning tea and development of an ‘Action Plan Committee’. Intention to identify 1/2 elders who would have representation on our committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Morning Tea</td>
<td>Brad/Janelle/Jane/KESO Team</td>
<td>5th November</td>
<td>Hold a welcome morning tea at DPS for all current parents/carers of our Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander children. Introduction of team members and discussion around our intentions of forming a working committee (2/3 reps) to develop our ‘Action Plan’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next Step</td>
<td></td>
<td>????</td>
<td>*plan to hold first meeting (what is our vision)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column 1</td>
<td>Column 2</td>
<td>Column 3</td>
<td>Column 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Principal Koorie Partnerships Working Group

Greater Shepparton and Moira Regions
The Group

- Formed as a result of a Principals’ Network Day in July 2014 which brought together the principals of a number of the region’s schools and a range of Indigenous community members.

- The Group is comprised of a number of principals, community members and groups, senior advisors, Koorie Engagement Unit staff and teachers.

- The vision of the Group is:

  ‘The Shepparton / Moira Network of schools will take collective responsibility to work in partnership with the local community to respect, recognise, promote and celebrate Koorie histories and cultures’
The Group will have three broad actions within its Reconciliation Action Plan....
1. All schools will commit to providing a comprehensive "First Nations" curriculum that is delivered to all students.

- This will be achieved through the commencement of the Goulburn Valley First Nations Curriculum Project.

- This Project will be in partnership with the GV Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (GVAECG).

- It will be overseen by a principal and facilitated by a teacher, drawing on the skills and expertise of various community members and other teachers.

- It will develop a comprehensive, cross-discipline Prep to Year 10 curriculum that provides for the inclusion of ATSI perspectives, including local perspectives, in a significant and meaningful manner.

- This curriculum will be developed in 2015 for implementation in 2016.
2. All schools will commit to improving the achievement, engagement, health and well-being of all Koorie students

- The Network and Region has committed to this work through the working party
- As the Working Party develops further in partnerships with our local aboriginal community, we will be able to guide the work of schools further by forming a Network plan
- To put this action on the agenda of every school in the Network is a priority
3. Principals will lead and prioritise actions that create stronger and more respectful education focused relationships with Koorie families.

- The Working Party will be responsible for developing resources for schools to use.
- The emphasis on real partnerships will be central to this.
- Develop a professional learning program for schools where local ‘enrichment’ and cultural input is conceptualised.
Challenges

- Limited time
- Financial resources
- Diverse range of community groups and interested parties to consult/work with
- Community dynamics
- Existing levels of school efforts, resources etc
- Attitudes of the wider-community

Action Plan Greater Shepparton and Moira Regions
Ways forward

- Strengthening/formalising relationships with key community members
- Establishment of protocols around involvement of community groups and members
- Formalising the next steps and strategies of second and third actions of our RAP
- Commencement of the curriculum program – starting with an audit of the curriculum
The Healesville Huddle
A journey of healing...
Background of Healesville Schools

- There are 4 primary schools and 1 High School in Healesville.
- In the past families have felt distanced from their children’s schools.
- Reconciliation is what most teachers want to do but just don’t know where to start.
- LAECG disbanded
- Lack of a KESO to help communicate with the community… and then…
LICI started

- I met Katrina. I talked about my concerns for the Healesville area. She worked her magic and we were allocated Glynis Vickery.

- We had a plan to audit our literacy resources, which we are currently doing. Glynis is now taking us on a completely new journey.

- We have access to resources we didn’t even know existed.

- We have a LIN established with the vision to have an LAECG.

- We have a forum for Koori families to share how they are feeling. We are getting feedback on what we could be doing better.
LICI

- We are looking to streamline all resources in the area. HICSA and other ATSI organisations within Healesville are liaising with Glynis first who can then facilitate programs through the schools.

- We are accountable for attendance information

- We are halfway through our audit

- Badger Creek is developing a history of the school to be included in the handbook so people know the true history of Coranderrk and Badger Creek.
Challenges

- Just not having someone in the community to support and communicate with families. Until Glynis came along. Now families have got their voice back. Someone is listening.
Ways Forward

- We are now able to offer information to families about events coming up.

- Glynis is now streamlining resources so they can be distributed well amongst schools.

- We are hoping to have a getting to know you BBQ/morning tea for the end of the year for our Koori families.

- We are providing great professional reading for our staff.

- We are starting to develop a curriculum that ensures that there are ATSI perspectives included.

- Most importantly we want our students to understand that they can all be leaders. Teaching them the skills that they need to become great leaders.
KATANDRA WEST PS ACTION PLAN 2014-2015
THE SCHOOL

- KWPS has a student population of 68 with a Koorie student population of approx 5%
- We are located in a dairy farming district just north of Shepparton, but it is a school population that is growing in size and diversity.

Action Plan Katandra West
Our aims:

- to ensure that our day to day practices reflect the inclusion of our Koorie students both culturally and academically.
• To grow strong partnerships with our Koorie community to work alongside them to ensure positive outcomes for all students.

• To work with the Koorie Partnership Working Party to embed Koorie focussed and relevant content in our curriculum
CHALLENGES

* Getting teacher buy-in
* Sourcing resources
* Linking in with community
WAYS FORWARD

* Work with Koorie Partnerships WP
* Develop school based programs with Keso and others
* Links with parents
An action plan is about turning good intentions into real actions and rising to the challenge of reconciliation and cultural inclusion. This is a business plan with a holistic approach to create meaningful relationships, enhanced respect and promote sustainable opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. It has come about because ‘we care’.

This draft action plan is not a compliance exercise. It is designed with current Aboriginal families in mind with a view to ensuring they feel welcome, safe and celebrated at Kyabram P – 12 College. The second intention is to ensure the future of positive reconciliation and integration of Aboriginal culture into our school culture and regular curriculum.

The Action plan will allow our school to focus on building relationships both internally and externally and raise awareness with stakeholders to ensure there is shared understanding and ownership of the Action within our school.

Forming the Action group will be reliant on volunteers from the local Aboriginal community and school Staff. When we meet it will be a culturally safe space. When we meet we will devise an action plan to take us into 2016 and beyond. It is intended that 70% of the Action group are Aboriginal community members. When we undertake activities like placing a plaque at the school to acknowledge country or hang Aboriginal paintings on the wall they are not tokenistic. They are symbols of welcome which contribute to Aboriginal people feeling safe in this place.

*Action Group members begin with:*

*Initial Leader: Sue Meeking (Bastow Course participant representing our school),*

*Wayne Cowley (KESO),*

*Stuart Bott (Principal or appointed Principal class person),*

*Heather McLennon (Aboriginal staff member),*

*Barb Buckell (interested welfare Staff member)*

*Kyabram community Elders will be invited to sign as soon as practicable.*

Over the coming 12 months we commit to follow the draft action plan below:

Signed:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELATIONSHIPS</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
<th>TIMELINE</th>
<th>DELIVERABLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raise internal awareness of the Action plan (and formation of the Action group)</td>
<td>Sue, Stuart (or appointed Principal)</td>
<td>Oct. 2014 – Feb 2015</td>
<td>A preliminary plan is developed and executed to raise awareness across the organisation about the Action plan commitment, particularly with key internal stakeholders. (see 'Raise internal understanding of protocols') A presentation on our Action plan commitment is given to all relevant areas of our school to ensure they have an understanding of how their area can contribute to the action plan. (At a Staff meeting after verification by the new Action plan group/ displays and regular announcements)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| RELATIONSHIPS | Establish an Action Plan working group. | Sue and Wayne | Names contacted and meeting planned by Nov 21st | An Action Plan Working Group is formed, comprising of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians. Contacts created will be sustainable members of the group. The purpose of the group is to begin the Action group. As a first aim we could reinstate the Indigenous community dinner and end of year awards night. Enlisted participants approach local Indigenous Elders to join our school reconciliation Action group. Potential Action Group to meet during November. Potential |
| RELATIONSHIPS | Develop external relationships | Sue and Wayne with support from developing Action group. | Dec 2015 | A list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and stake holders within our local area or sphere of influence that we could approach to assist us in our understanding of the potential activities in our future Action plan’s development. *List published to Staffshare and displayed for use e.g. Library / posters.* |
| RELATIONSHIPS | Celebrate National reconciliation week. (NRW) | Action plan group | 27\(^{th}\) May – 3\(^{rd}\) June | Our working group (or representatives from our school) to attend a community event or organize an internal event to recognize and celebrate NRW (27\(^{th}\) May – 3\(^{rd}\) June annually) |
| RESPECT | Raise internal understanding of protocols | Sue, Stuart, Wayne. | Oct. 2014 | The plan that is developed to raise awareness includes opportunities to raise understanding of the meaning and significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, to our employees. |
| | | | | 1. *Flags explained to community and sustained plan for flying daily. Done.* |
| | | | | 2. *Acknowledgement of Country at most assemblies. Done.* |
| | | | | 3. *Cultural training of Staff members. Begun; opportunities continually sought* |
| RESPECT | Investigate cultural development | Sue | Dec 2014 - Feb 2015 (as soon as time is allowed at a Staff meeting to allow this data collection.) | Capture base line data on our school employees’ current level of understanding around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, cultures and contributions. *(Sue has a short questionnaire designed for this purpose)*
*From our findings a business case for cultural awareness can be developed. Input from all school departments can be sought to enhance the integration of Aboriginal capabilities into our core business; education for all.* |
| RESPECT | Celebrate NAIDOC week | Action group | July 2015 | Our working group *(or representatives from our school)* to attend a community event or organize an internal event to recognize and celebrate NRW *(1st Sunday to 2nd Sunday in July annually)* |
| OPPORTUNITIES | Consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment | Leadership team | June 2015 | A business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our school is scoped and considered. Baseline data is collected to inform future fair employment developments at our school. |
| OPPORTUNITIES | Consider Supplier diversity. | Action Group | Oct 2015 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander supplier diversity programs scoped and considered. *I need more information on this option. Is it related to including Aboriginal knowledge in our school curriculum?* |
| OPPORTUNITIES | Other opportunities | Sue to arrange initial contacts | March 2015 | *Shepparton District have taken constructive steps in Indigenous inclusion even in curriculum.* |
St. Augustines, Kyabram, developed a scope and sequence which we may be able to share for continuity for our towns people.

Paintings by past indigenous student purchased and presented to the school community to be hung in 10-12 building.

Invite experts to share Aboriginal culture with our students regularly. Decide how often students should be exposed to this opportunity.

Check, by survey, current curriculum approach to Indigenous study e.g. history.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRACKING</th>
<th>Build support for the action plan</th>
<th>Action Group</th>
<th>Data Dec 2014 /Oct 2015.</th>
<th>Data collection is able to measure our progress and successes. Required resourcing for our Action plan is defined and available.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRACKING</td>
<td>Indigenous students are cared for specifically.</td>
<td>Wayne with class teachers.</td>
<td>March 2015</td>
<td>Each Aboriginal student’s family is offered the opportunity to discuss an individual learning plan for their student twice a year. KESO began this process in 2012. KESO to continue to use current template to write ILP’s. Awards night reinstated. Each Indigenous is awarded for their success.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This Action plan began with a template issued through the Bastow Indigenous Inclusion course.

Adapted to our local scene as a ‘start up’ plan, by Sue Meeking, who represents our school at the Indigenous Inclusion course of study.

It is intended that the Action group will revise the plan or follow the plan until a new plan is devised in October 2015. Listed volunteers are asked to sign commitment to this draft action plan so that we can begin our journey of reconciliation.

Contact:

Sue Meeking 0417721624

Primary Campus

**Our business**
McGuire College is a proud Government Secondary College with a diverse multicultural, co-educational student population of 432 students. Our College, in partnership with parents and our community, places the “student at the centre” to provide the best possible outcomes for all students. The diversity of our student and wider community population is unique and a true strength. Our College has 55 equivalent full-time staff: Three Principal class, 40 teachers and 20 Education Support Staff.

Our College values of Respect, Environment, Accountability and Learning are core expectations of all members of our school community. Our College community is a R.E.A.L. place where all members are responsible for the wellbeing and engagement of all.

As an accredited member of the DEECD Select Entry Accelerated Learning Program (SEAL) McGuire College offers an accelerated program for students to complete in Years 7-10. The College is also able to offer a wide range of Vocational Education and Training (VET) to students from both McGuire College and other local schools. McGuire College also offers VCE and VCAL classes for students.

McGuire College has an emphasis on literacy and numeracy working with Prof John Munro to develop the High Reliability Literacy Teaching Practices. These practices have become embedded in English lessons and the college is now introducing these strategies across all domains.

Construction of the new $1.9 million McGuire College Language and Cultural Centre was completed in 2012, providing students with a new state of the art learning hub with a focus on the provision of language development for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students; and the development of a number of programs and activities aimed at engaging families and the wider school community in College life. Our college has 22 Indigenous students which is 5% of the college student cohort.

The college has developed strong links with Latrobe University and GoTAFE to raise students’ awareness of courses and careers that are available. This is developing the students’ aspirations as they understand the possibilities available to them.
Our Action Plan

We have developed an action plan to improve the learning outcomes for all students and to ensure that they have appropriate pathways through and beyond McGuire College.

We have an Assistant Principal and part of her role is to ensure we have inclusive practices and curriculum for all students. We have a Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Leading Teacher who ensures that all students receive appropriate support and guidance. We have a Koorie Education Support Officer (KESO) provided by region for two days a week who develops community and family partnerships and supports our students where necessary.

Our partnerships/current activities

We are part of the Shepparton Network Koorie Inclusion Working Party to build partnerships with the local indigenous community, specifically working with elders and leaders from the Yorta Yorta and Bangerang people.

We welcome all people to our school and embrace diversity. We work closely with local Koorie agencies that include ASHE, Ganbina who have spaces at our college in which to work with our Koorie students. Students are involved Dare To Dream, Worlds of Work (WOW) and other extra curricula activities.

School student leaders attend and participate in the Sorry Day Breakfast and Reconciliation Ceremony annually. Harmony Day is celebrated annually when all cultures are recognised and diversity is celebrated. The community is heavily involved on this day attending a luncheon and assembly.
Over the next 1 to 12 months, we commit to: (these are examples of Actions that you may use, you can delete and create your own. You can also just focus on one area of Relationship, Respect or opportunities)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop external relationships</td>
<td>Working party</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Continue and build upon our relationships and partnerships with local community groups. The working party will inform all principals in the Shepparton/Moira Network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)</td>
<td>AP Student leaders KESO</td>
<td>27th May-3rd June</td>
<td>3. Our college will be represented at community events to recognise and celebrate NRW (27th May – 3rd June annually).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Raise internal awareness of the Action Plan | Working Party | | 4. A plan is developed and executed to raise awareness across the network about the Action Plan commitment, particularly with schools with no Koorie student enrolments..  
5. A presentation on our Action Plan commitment is given to all relevant areas of our school and network to ensure they have an understanding of how their area can contribute to the Action Plan. |
<p>| Celebrate NAIDOC Week | Whole school | July | 6. Our Working Group will have an assembly to recognise and celebrate NAIDOC Week (1st Sunday – 2nd Sunday in July each year). |
| Raise internal understanding of protocols | Whole school | | 7. The plan that is developed to raise awareness includes opportunities to raise understanding of the meaning and significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, to our employees. |
| Consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment | | | 8. We employ according to merit and equity and consequently we have a multicultural staff at our school. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consider supplier diversity</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other opportunities</td>
<td>9. A curriculum is being developed by the Action Plan Working Group that will be used by all schools within the network throughout our consultation with internal and external stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trackin g</td>
<td>Build support for the Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>10. We have defined available resourcing for our Action Plan. 11. Our data collection is able to measure our progress and successes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contact details**

Jan Gregory Principal  [gregory.jan.j@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:gregory.jan.j@edumail.vic.gov.au)
Susanne Gill Assistant Principal  [gill.susanne.s@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:gill.susanne.s@edumail.vic.gov.au)
Leading Indigenous Cultural Inclusion
Newhaven Primary School
Caroline Blakely & Sigrid Tucker
Newhaven Primary School

- Situated on Phillip Island (Boon Wurrung country)
- 125 students
- 6 students from Aboriginal backgrounds (from 2 families)
- 16 staff members
Our Action Plan

- To build relationships with the local Aboriginal community and our school
- To be a culturally inclusive school
What we have done so far

- Participation in the Shearwater Festival

- Aunty Faye Stewart-Muir (Boon Wurrung elder) taught grade 3/4's some Boon Wurrung language and spoke about their traditions

- Artist and author Lisa Kennedy read her pictures books to grade 3/4's. Both books were donated to our library

- Whole school created puppets for Shearwater Festival
What we have done so far

New Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal flags were obtained.

Literature by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors or illustrators has been located and is in the process of being catalogued.
Challenges

- How do you encourage whole staff ownership and individual initiative? (re: learning stone)
- Time
- Internal politics (important to us, but how important is it others?)
- Financial constraints
  - quality resources
  - training and professional development
Ways Forward

- Acknowledgement of Country at school events
- Flag poles
- Curriculum documents
- Physical Acknowledgement in school foyer (hand painted by students)
- How are we going to resource our library?
THE PAVILION SCHOOL
everyone has the right to education

LEADING INDIGENOUS CULTURAL INCLUSION
JOSIE HOWIE – CAMPUS PRINCIPAL
MICHAEL SCICLUNA – CAMPUS COORDINATOR
What is The Pavilion School?

- The Pavilion School is a Victorian state secondary school for students who have disengaged from or been excluded by schools or education providers.
- 205 students enrolled
- Five key indicators for success at the Pavilion:
  - Shared philosophical approach
  - Flexibility
  - Relationships
  - Skilled multi-disciplinary team
  - Real educational outcomes
Our motto

“Everyone has the right to education”
Article 26, United Nations Declaration of Human Rights

Action Plan Pavilion School
Are young people who:
want to continue their education
Have been excluded by or have left mainstream schools
Are young parents
have mental health problems
Are youth justice and child protection clients
Have social and behavioural problems
Use drugs and alcohol
Have experienced trauma
Live in poverty

Pavilion Students
Student leader focus group:

Student comments regarding our inclusion practices to date

“we need more colour around here”

“we don’t always want to eat toasted sandwiches”

“we could design and plant an indigenous garden”

“we could have a family fun day to get more parents into the school”

Student Leaders
This idea is the first to come directly from our student leaders.

This will be the first to be considered by our RAP working group

Students suggest we turn this area into an indigenous garden.

Students will research, plant, grow and maintain the garden.

This will be embedded in school curriculum

The Indigenous Garden
Audit of the school space:

One recommendation was to look at our entrance and start here. Can you see the barbed wire?

“very institutional feel”

“not enough colour around the building”

A welcoming school?
Challenges

1. Who to invite? How to invite? Where to begin? Who to ring first?
2. Defining the scope of the group.
3. Explaining the purpose of the group, making it sound interesting and meaningful.
4. Engaging our parents.
5. Dealing with students with many complex presentations.
6. Handing over control to the group to enact the plan.
Ways forward

- To embed our learning and knowledge into the whole school culture.
- To provide opportunities for ongoing consultations with community.
- To ensure the RAP group remains active, purposeful and meaningful.
Action Plan for the Year 2015

Our business

Peninsula Specialist College is a dual mode setting for students with a diagnosed intellectual disability. The college caters for students ages 5-18 years old in its Primary & Secondary Department.

PSC offers a comprehensive curriculum program to ensure that all students achieve personal success in a caring and supportive environment.

There are 60 staff members.
The school has presently 9 identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Our Action Plan

To become a culturally inclusive and sensitive place of education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

All staff members are responsible.

Current activities

Peninsula Specialist College is in the process of establishing a Learning Stone Area with the support of John Murray. An initial Rock Smoking Ceremony was performed by Aunty Fay Mulr, a Boon Wurrung Elder.

The school has a designated Koorie Support Teacher and employs Aunty Marg.

The teacher develops and supports programs for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff throughout the school with the assistance of Aunty Marg.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish an Action Plan Working Group</td>
<td></td>
<td>Term 1 / 2015</td>
<td>An Action Plan Working Group is formed, comprising of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians from the college community and the wider community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop external relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>A list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and stakeholders within our local area that we could approach to assist us in our understanding of the potential activities in our future Action Plan’s is developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrate NAIDOC Week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Our Working Group participates in a community NAIDOC Week event, or held an internal event (1st Sunday – 2nd Sunday in July each year).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage respectfully with parent community.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Conversation involving parents, Aunty Marg outside agencies. Providing assistance in accessing appropriate services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development Opportunity for all staff</td>
<td></td>
<td>Term 1 / 2015</td>
<td>Professional Development Session by Aunty Fay.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact details:

Peter Koop, Principal
Wanganui Park Secondary College
Shepparton
School Background

- Largest public school in Shepparton.
- Approximately 1,270 students and 140 staff.
- Between 70 and 80 students who identify as Indigenous (large cohort of 25 students in Year 7).
- School has a mixed history in terms of how it has catered for ATSI students and their families.
Our RAP will be include a mix of initiatives introduced this past year and further initiatives we wish to pursue...
Successes this year include...

- The running of Koorie Action Group meetings each term with a number of parents and staff in attendance
- The introduction of a Year 12 Graduation BBQ for our Koorie students
- The running of a number of NAIDOC Week activities, including the first-ever whole school assembly
- Curriculum initiatives and professional development, including an upcoming dedicated for ATSI Perspectives PD and Planning Day run in-school for 10 select staff
- The creation of a Koorie Programs Leader role (to commence in 2015)
Inclusions for next year...

- The introduction of a parent co-chair to the Koorie Action Group meetings, formal parent members of the Group, and increased attendance of parents
- The establishment of a student Reconciliation Committee
- The creation of a ‘cultural space’ within the school for Koorie students, and their families
- Improvements to the school’s foyer to make it more culturally inclusive
- Greater coordination of the programs and initiatives available to our Koorie students
- Inclusion of ATSI perspectives in the curriculum as a school-wide priority
Challenges

- Community dynamics
- Getting parents involved in school activities and initiatives, including gaining access to a broad range of parents
- Extra-curricular culture of the school
- A number of different roles being played by a number of different staff
- Attitudes of staff
Next steps

- The establishment of clear parameters of responsibility amongst staff members
- Survey of parents and staff
- Establishing membership of Koorie Action Group, meeting protocols and meeting dates
- Circulating draft RAP amongst Koorie Action Group members for feedback (and then approval at first meeting 2015)
Appendix 2 - Participant reflections

Individual reflection – Caroline Blakely

Personal learning reflection

As a graduate teacher at Newhaven primary School I wanted to include aboriginal content in my classroom. My studies at Monash University had included Aboriginal content so I was aware of current ideas and issues relating to inclusion of indigenous content in schools. As a new graduate I felt like I was working in isolation when it came to teaching about Aboriginal culture. It wasn’t included in the school curriculum document. I searched through the Aboriginal Studies section in the teacher’s resource room for anything that was suitable to use in my grade 3/4 class. Most of it was very dated, generic and not much use at all. The Reconciliation website, My Place and Dust Echoes were the basis for many of my lessons during this time. In my second year of full time teaching, a boy from the Tiwi Islands was in my class and his brother in the Prep class.

The Prep teacher and I agreed that it was important to make these students feel cared for and respected at our school. We recognised that as a school we could do more to acknowledge aboriginal culture.

The Aboriginal flag is now permanently displayed in the assembly hall. Our grade six students read the Acknowledgement of country every Monday morning to open whole school assembly. As a whole school we walked for Reconciliation around our town. We have developed a Learning Stone Site on the school grounds and held a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony at its induction.

Participating in the Leading Indigenous Cultural Inclusion

P.D. has made me realise that our school has been on the journey towards Indigenous Cultural Inclusion for a couple of years now. We have come a long way. We have made contact with local aboriginal community members and participated in an important local cultural event. We have begun to look critically at the teaching resources we have and have begun to catalogue all the literature by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander authors and illustrators in our library. My goal is to develop a curriculum document for our school that includes activities and resources with Aboriginal content that can be used from Prep to Grade 6. Some things have happened quietly or have just been incorporated into the school routine. Others have been joyous, loud and colourful. Either way they have had an effect on other staff members and it has been great to see and hear colleagues actively thinking about creating opportunities to be culturally inclusive. Quality resources are being sought and shared.

I really hope that any changes and implementations we have made and plan to make can be sustained and built upon by future staff and leaders at my school.
Individual reflection – Jane Gray

The Blue Wren

Not so long ago, thousands of years after the beginning of Dreaming, hundreds of years after the white fellas came and even after the yarns were told on Youtube, a Blue Wren came looking for a safe, warm, friendly place to build a nest.

He and his missus flew all over the vast and beautiful Gunai –Kurnai country checking out all the places where their Wren cousins lived. They came to a place with rolling hills, huge forests and many cows eating grass. The wrens noticed that this place was the home of Warrigul, the wild dog and Buln Buln, the Lyre bird. A little further on they found a town that was full of people going about their business and wearing Lyrebirds all over their clothes. But those people did not seem quite right!

In that place was a school where all the little’uns went to learn and in that school the boss and some others decided to go to see if they could find out why it seemed to be not quite right with all the people. All the bosses and teachers and families in that school had been working for many years to find a way to heal and best start and close gaps. They had built an agreement with people and that helped for a little ….but not really. The group wandered off to a big, big place in another country where they met lots of others who were also worried about their people. They all shared many yarns and looked at what had happened in Nations all over. The people at the big place they called the Koorie Institute had made a place that was just right for the first people and they came from all over to learn – but not to leave their country! The first people came from all the nations and they learned how to be healthy, educated, sensitive and true to their family, community and place in the world. They took new skills, ideas and ways back to their homes.

At the Institute, the boss and the others found out about the first people and how they were taken away from their homes, place and country and how they were lost and lonely for a long, long time. They learned about how the white fellas thought that it would be a good idea to make everyone live like them. But, after some time everyone could see that it wasn't working and the first people were hurt and angry and lost.

Little by little all the fellas but especially the first people decided that things had to change and like the Blue Wren they had to find their homes and their countries to be strong again. The boss and others learned that the first people from all over the Nations needed to know and learn and be proud of themselves and their real homes. They knew that in the school there were some of these people – maybe pretending to be white fellas, maybe hiding away, maybe trying to be safe and comfy but still a bit lost.

At the school they talked and decided to make a plan to build ‘Identity’ and ‘community’ – these things that had been lost. They got some people together for a ‘cuppa’ and chatted about a new way of making the future for the young’uns - one in which they would know who they are, where they come from and why they should be proud.

When the boss and the others got back to the school, they found the Blue Wren and his missus the Red Wren hovering around the door – and they wanted to come in! The Blue Wren said, “ Can we come in and build a nest in this place…our cousins are all about here.” Then he said,” Why are you fellas all wearing Lyrebirds when the Blue Wren is your totem and these are your stories?”

All the people at the school said, “Maybe we have not been listening to the right stories and we don’t know enough about this place, our place. Yes, Blue Wren come in…..help us to learn together about Drouin and its stories and the first people who were here and those who are here now".
Individual reflection – Josie Howie

THE PAVILION SCHOOL

- Everyone has the right to education -

Individual Learning

Josie Howie

I applied for this training knowing that I had an obligation to work more effectively and more strategically with our indigenous students, family and community members. At the Pavilion we have a high number of aboriginal students and we have always been proud of how we have successfully engaged and retained these students. However I also knew that the learning and social outcomes for these students were still sitting below that of the rest of the student cohort. I knew that we had to somehow engage these students’ families and community if we were to make a greater impact on these students’ lives. So going into this course I had this aim on my mind.

The most important part of the course for me was the relationships that were formed, the conversations and connections made with everyone involved. I loved doing the training at the Institute of Koorie Education and being immersed in the true history of Australia. I found it particularly powerful and interesting to hear personal perspectives from Brian, Rachelle and Karen. Karen’s presentation of her life story that we heard over dinner was not only very moving but also very inspiring. This presentation urged me to closely consider the lives of many of our aboriginal young women whose lives were so similar to her early years and to think about how we could incorporate role models, aspirational speakers and more indigenous leaders into our school and our curriculum.

The school visit was enlightening as I got to hear a fresh perspective on our school, from our course leaders as well as from our students. While Michael and I had developed a good RAP plan, the most interesting learning came from sitting in a room with Karen and Julie and four of our young aboriginal leaders and listening to their ideas for what we could do in the school to make it more engaging and interesting. At this moment I realised the hardest part of developing the RAP working group would be for me to let go of my need to control the process and hand it over to the students and the community. Michael and I would be facilitators. Within minutes of talking with our student leaders they had provided us with innovative ideas and strategies for how to better include our aboriginal communities. I couldn’t write down their ideas fast enough and I realised I had vastly underestimated our students’ willingness to lead this project and be excited by it. I had been so focussed on my own “big picture” thinking that I had forgotten that the real action would come from our students and their determination to improve the school. This was the greatest learning moment of the course for me.
Individual reflection – Michael Scicluna

I have learnt to be consultative. In the past I may have thought that being well intended was good enough, however this process has opened my eyes to the reality that this is not the case. That by making decisions for aboriginal people about issues directly affecting them, I am potentially re-enacting the process that resulted in such dreadful outcomes for Indigenous people in the first place. Say less, listen more

I have learnt that just because I have forged positive relationships with my local indigenous students, that doesn’t necessary translate to all Aboriginal people. The nuances contained in creating these relationships in the north western suburbs of Melbourne are not necessarily relevant to other communities.

I have gained a different perspective on Australian history, specifically in regards to colonisation and the events that have unfolded since. I have been inspired and encouraged to discuss this history with my students and my own children, so they can better understand how the past has shaped the present. Furthermore, I have a more informed opinion on why more accurate indigenous history should be included in the curriculum.

I have learnt that the high fence around our school is not inviting. It suggests repression, and represents limitation of movement. The high fence is not good.

I have a clearer understanding of aboriginal learning styles, law, family, traditions and culture. This understanding will help me be aware of and create a more inclusive and inviting environment, both in regards to physical settings and educational practice.

I have had confirmation that we are doing many things well already.
Individual reflection  – Sigrid Tucker

I decided to do this PD after being forwarded the email from my acting principal. I had just been involved in organising the Learning Stone ceremony at my school and my acting principal thought it would be a natural extension to build on to what had just begun in our school; the recognition of the importance of acknowledging and respecting Indigenous culture. I have been teaching at Newhaven Primary for 4 years, 3 being full time with my own class. Every year I have had students who are aboriginal in my class. Every year I ensure I include some form of indigenous culture in my program as I learnt at Uni the importance to do so when you have indigenous students. I purchased Aunty Wendy’s Mob “Happy to be me” teacher resource kit and used the books and songs to engage my students in indigenous culture. As I teach in the junior area this resource was ideal. My students especially love the songs and actions that go with them. In my first year my preps performed “Happy to be me” on our grandparents day. This song talks about the connection Aboriginal people feel to country and their family. I also used it to talk about where we live and our connection to our local community. These students are now in grade 2 and on Friday afternoons they join my current prep/1 class for singing, we often sing this and other Aunty Wendy songs; they still love it. The songs make me feel a connection to my students.

This PD has equipped me with further resources and understanding about how to embed Indigenous culture in my teaching. I am excited with how far my school has come in the short time since celebrating our Learning Stones ceremony and me beginning this PD. I am encouraged by how my colleagues have embraced what Caroline and I are doing. At our recent fete, a colleague thought to ask the MC to do an Acknowledgment of Country; even though it was crazy and busy with kids running everywhere. I was impressed and appreciated that it was important enough to my colleague to think about doing. This shows me my colleagues feel improving how we acknowledge and value Indigenous culture in our school is important.

A major focus of our action plan in recent weeks has been the Shearwater Festival. Our involvement in this festival has naturally evolved from the work we have been doing on our action plan and because a student will be performing. We thought, what better way to involve our local community in our school and for us to be involved in a wider community event than to take up the offer from the Shearwater Festival organisers and open our school to storytellers, artists and musicians. Our students have listened to Boon Wurrung elders tell stories, have learnt some Boon Wurrung language and met an Aboriginal author, listened to her read her books and been given copies to put in our library.

One of our students will be performing in a Creation Dance with local Boon Wurrung dancers. For me this will be the highlight of the festival.

My concerns going forward with our action plan is to ensure it continues to be valued by all staff. That it doesn’t get lost amongst the busyness of our school lives. That it doesn’t become another document left on the shelf to gather dust and pulled out in few years and we say “oh you remember when we started this”.

---

Leading Indigenous Cultural Inclusion Final Report  Page 92