

## OUR COMMITMENT

The Partnership Agreement is a statement of intent of how the NSW AECG and the Department of Education and Training are planning on working together.

The strength of the NSW AECG is its community base through its network of local and regional AECGs. This allows Aboriginal people to have a voice in self determining their educational future which will impact on the future prosperity of Aboriginal communities.

This strength of the NSW AECG is pivotal to the government as it allows policies and programs to be developed that meet the needs of Aboriginal people and their communities. The working together of Aboriginal communities and the Department of Education and Training is strengthened, under this Partnership Agreement, to achieve common goals set in consultation and negotiation with Aboriginal communities.

This Partnership Agreement recognises the critical need to work together, across schools and TAFE colleges, to achieve the aspirations and potential of Aboriginal learners.

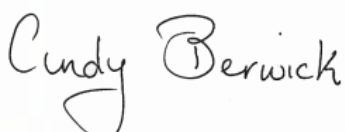
The Partnership Agreement is also critically important in fostering collaboration between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in promoting a better understanding of our shared history, respect and acceptance of both cultures and recognition of the unique place Aboriginal people have in this country.

The Partnership Agreement has meaning and it has purpose.

It means accountability to the community as we continue to demand our right to an education and training system that acknowledges and respects Aboriginal people as belonging to the oldest living culture of humanity as well as the First peoples of this land.

We have laid the foundation; a stepping stone on which to continue to build.

The NSW AECG will unequivocally commit to working with the Department of Education and Training on the agreed priorities and supporting the translation of those priorities' into practice at the regional and local levels.



Cindy Berwick  
**President**  
**NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated**

For too long there has been a gap in opportunity and in achievement between Aboriginal people and their fellow Australians.

To turn this around requires the involvement of Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal parents and carers, grandparents, families, students, their teachers, school staff, TAFE staff and every single person that works in education and training.

This Partnership Agreement reflects a relationship between the Department of Education and Training and the NSW AECG that exists to provide Aboriginal students with the chance to enjoy more choices, more freedom, better health and greater opportunities.

Both organisations are making clear and specific commitments to one another about what we're going to do and how we're going to do it. We will need to work through the challenges that will inevitably arise.

Our partnership is not new. This Agreement is built on a very close relationship that the department already enjoys with the NSW AECG. Through this agreement we now have clear expectations about building relationships with Aboriginal students, Aboriginal families and communities and the people of the NSW AECG.

All good relationships are built on honesty and openness. This can be confronting, but as we proceed together our actions will develop trust.

We must genuinely consult and collaborate with local Aboriginal communities to ensure that the work we are doing in our schools and TAFE Institutes is responding to the education and training needs of Aboriginal people.

We must have high expectations for our Aboriginal students, for ourselves and for the community.

We mustn't allow ourselves any excuses for lack of success for Aboriginal students at school and TAFE.



Michael Coutts-Trotter  
**Director-General of Education and Training**  
**Managing Director of TAFE NSW**