

Aboriginal Learning and Engagement Centre Guidelines 2021

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for Directors, Educational Leadership, Principals and Learning and Engagement Staff on the process for establishing and the effective running of an Aboriginal Learning and Engagement Centre within their school.

Background Information

In June 2019, NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian unveiled 14 Premier's Priorities which represent the NSW Government's commitment to making a significant difference to enhance the quality of life of the people of NSW. Working towards Aboriginal students attaining their final school qualifications at the same rate as non-Aboriginal students is an important part of fostering equality of opportunity for Aboriginal people. Recent studies show a clear link between completion of year 12 and positive future employment or educational outcomes.

Increasing the proportion of Aboriginal students attaining their Higher School Certificate (HSC) by 50 per cent means that 1000 additional Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students will attain their HSC by 2023. To achieve this, it is imperative we work with Aboriginal communities, and accompany curriculum with culture and language to ensure young people maintain their cultural identity. Engaging and including Aboriginal families and communities is essential to achieving the priority.

In December, 2019 a co-design workshop involving NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Bodies (CAPO), Premiers Implementation Unit (PIU) and the Department identified four agreed initiatives to progress this Premier's Priority. These cover the following:

1. Integrate Aboriginal culture into teaching and learning
2. Goal setting/mentoring program delivered by NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (NSW AECG)
3. Targeted Learning and Engagement Centres to retain students, commencing with targeted Year 9, 2020 cohort

4. Locally-tailored cultural immersion training for educators

Aim

This initiative aims to address initiative number 3 above, through the provision of wellbeing, academic and cultural support to enhance outcomes for secondary Aboriginal students. A key focus of Aboriginal Learning and Engagement Centres (AL&ECs) will be to improve student engagement, attendance, retention, HSC attainment and support for students at key transition points to progress to the Premier's Priority.

School Selection

School selection is based on high potential to meet Premier's Priority targets for Aboriginal students, including the following variables:

- Number of Aboriginal students enrolled at the school in 2019
- Percentage for HSC completions for the Year 9 2013/2014 cohorts (given extra year to complete)
- Average percentage of Year 9 Aboriginal students at or above national minimum standard for reading and numeracy, of those present or exempt in Year 7 cohort, 2018.

Project Management

Engagement and Operational Management

Funding is available for the establishment of an Aboriginal Learning and Engagement Centre. Funding is to be used to:

- Employ a non-teaching Head Teacher, Transition and Engagement (1 FTE)
- Flexible funding - Classroom Teacher (0.4 FTE)
- Employ an Aboriginal Student Learning Support Officer (1 FTE) (Identified position)

Funds will be allocated to the selected schools and managed within the school.

Recruitment and Conditions

Learning and Engagement Centre positions are to be recruited through an Expression of Interest process, advertised through SchoolBiz and at the local level.

Expression of Interest Process

The Principal will be the convener of the interview panel and panels must include an Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) representative.

The recommended applicant must be endorsed by the Director, Educational Leadership.

These positions will be funded on a temporary basis from Term 2, 2020 to the end of Term 4 2023. The appointment may end earlier if extenuating circumstances arise, such as:

- The funding for the position's ceases
- The need for the position ceases to exist and/or
- Performance in the position is unsatisfactory.

Schools must adhere to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO).

Expectations of the Learning and Engagement Centre

The Learning and Engagement Centre will provide personalised support to increase the proportion of Aboriginal students attaining Year 12 by 50 per cent by 2023, while maintaining their cultural identity.

Learning and Engagement Centres will also:

- Improve the educational outcomes and wellbeing of Aboriginal students so that they excel and achieve in every aspect of their education.
- Ensure collaborative decision making with Aboriginal peoples, parents and carers, families and their communities.
- To meet the learning needs and support the cultural knowledge and identity of every Aboriginal student.
- Ensure that every targeted Aboriginal student is known, valued and cared for.

The Learning and Engagement Centre cannot be used as a:

- Withdrawal room for negative behaviour.
- A common room for students to not attend classes.

Operational Requirements

- Hours will not exceed standard teaching hours. The Head Teacher Engagement and Transition position will be employed on temporary basis to the end of term 4, 2023.
- Aboriginal SLSOs will be employed on temporary basis to the end of term 4, 2023. This is an Aboriginal identified position.
- 0.4 FTE Flexible Funding is to be used at the discretion of the Head Teacher, Transition and Engagement and Principal for tutoring and support, of targeted students.
- The Aboriginal Learning and Engagement Centre should operate on the school site during school hours.

Aboriginal Learning and Engagement Centre Position Role Statements

Head Teacher, Transitions and Engagement

The Head Teacher, Transition and Engagement is preferably non-teaching and to work in collaboration with the whole school community in particular school principal and the school executive to:

- Lead the focus on supporting outcomes of targeted cohort to increase the proportion of Aboriginal students attaining Year 12 by 50 per cent by 2023, while maintaining their cultural identity.
- Plan, implement and evaluate programs that focus on academic, wellbeing and cultural support for Aboriginal students including in relation to attendance, retention, HSC completion and post school options.
- Use and analyse data and strategies designed to respond to improve Aboriginal student attendance, participation and engagement in learning and to inform effective practice. Collect, analyse and share qualitative and quantitative data to support and inform strategies for Aboriginal students.

- Lead to support implementation of this initiative across the school plan, to clearly describe the shared expectations and targets for improvement in outcomes for Aboriginal students across the school.
- Support the realignment of existing and new school resources to focus on evidence strategies that build teacher capacity to achieve these outcomes.
- Liaise with teachers, support staff and parents/carers to develop personalised learning pathways and strategies to improve educational outcomes and post schooling opportunities for Aboriginal students.
- Support Aboriginal students through transition points.
- Identify and support the personalised learning and cultural identity needs of targeted Aboriginal students.
- Identify and support gifted and talented students, disengaged students and students needing additional learning support.
- Work with the Local AECG and the local Aboriginal community.
- Establish effective partnerships with agencies to support Aboriginal students' cultural, wellbeing and academic outcomes.
- Manage the use of the flexible teacher funding to ensure targeted students receive specific literacy / numeracy and/or Key Learning Area (KLA) tutoring.
- Support preparation of targeted Aboriginal students for readiness and successful achievement of HSC Minimum Standard.
- Recognise and celebrate Aboriginal student achievements.
- Ensure that every Aboriginal student is known, valued and care for.
- Guide the work of the Learning and Engagement Centre SLSO, to support delivery of Learning and Engagement Centre activities and achievement of initiative outcomes.

The 0.4FTE Classroom Teacher allocation is primarily to be used flexibly to engage a range of staff as appropriate and required to:

- Support for targeted students to achieve literacy / numeracy and subject specific skills required to successfully undertake HSC Minimum Standard and achieve HSC.
- Support for Aboriginal students in completing tasks, such as homework assignments, library/IT research across all curriculum areas including effective planning and time management skills.

In addition, this allocation may be used for;

- Liaison with teachers, support staff and parents/carers to develop personalised strategies to improve educational outcomes and post schooling opportunities for Aboriginal students.
- Work in collaboration with the local AECG and community in supporting the initiative.
- Collection and analysis of data to inform targeted support.
- Monitoring and evaluating student participation, engagement and academic achievement.
- Assisting students at key transition points throughout the year.

[Applicable Award Crown Employees \(Teachers in Schools and Related Employees\) Salaries and Conditions Award 2014](#)

Student Learning Support Officer (SLSO) – Identified Aboriginal Position

The Aboriginal SLSO duties focus primarily on assisting teachers to engage Aboriginal students in learning, school activities and in school routines by:

- Assisting individual and/or small groups of Aboriginal students with their learning tasks.
- Providing pastoral care support for Aboriginal students.
- Supporting Aboriginal students in completing tasks, such as homework assignments, library/IT research across all curriculum areas including effective planning and time management skills.
- Participating in appropriate classroom and school wide Aboriginal education activities and support in preparation of learning materials, including culturally appropriate materials.
- Assisting students at key transition points throughout the year.
- Assisting targeted students prepare for the HSC Minimum Standard.
- Working in collaboration with the local AECG and community in supporting the initiative.
- Work closely with the Head Teacher, Transition and Engagement to support delivery of Learning and Engagement Centre activities and achievement of initiative outcomes.

[Applicable Award: Crown Employees \(School Administrative and Support Staff\)](#)

Aboriginal Learning and Engagement Centre Activities

The Aboriginal Learning and Engagement Centre focuses on delivering quality strategic individualised support and activities that enhance students' learning and outcomes via a personalised learning pathway (PLP) process. This includes improved student engagement, attendance, retention, HSC attainment and support for students at key transition points to progress to the Premier's Priority.

PLPs provide a structure for planning and monitoring processes to ensure goals are established and achieved for student learning. PLPs identify both opportunities as well as potential obstacles that might impede a student achieving their goals and charts a course through them.

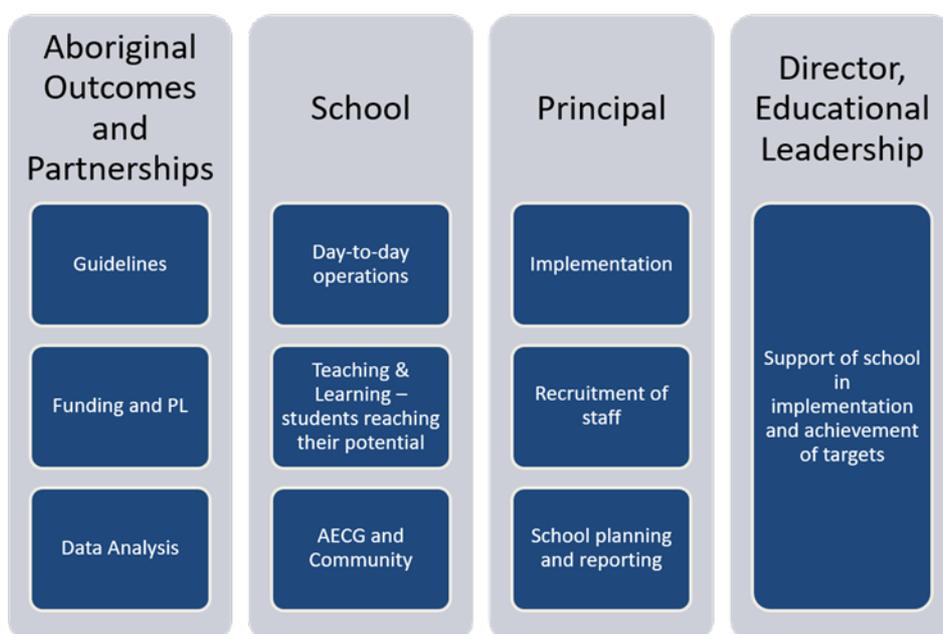
The Wellbeing Framework (2015) states that Aboriginal students will have an individual personalised learning pathway (PLP). Personalised learning pathways are an effective methodology for having a positive result on the educational and wellbeing outcomes of Aboriginal students and schools are encouraged to implement them using Aboriginal equity loading funding. Personalised learning pathways can include the critical work that might occur at key transition points for Aboriginal students.

The Learning and Engagement Centre activities will be established and implemented to cater for individual students and individual school needs. The Learning and Engagement Centres will offer activities linked to students' PLPs and may include:

- Identify and support the learning and cultural identity needs of targeted Aboriginal students. Identify and support gifted and talented students, disengaged students and students needing additional learning support.
- Individual and personalised student support
- Goal setting
- Development of homework / study plans
- Support for students across a range of KLAs
- Provision of individual or group tutoring sessions
- Assistance with assignments and/or study groups in the lead up to assessment times
- Provision of focus lessons / workshops to build academic skills e.g. how to research – online, in libraries; inquiry learning, including student assessment; peer support and group work

- Provision of self-access resources – physical and digital resources which may otherwise not be available to students after school hours
- Implementation of buddy system of support and linking students with a key teacher (with their agreeance) who supports as a ‘significant other’.
- Assisting with appropriate subject selection advice and post-schooling options
- HSC Minimum Standard support
- Early identification and addressing of barriers to student HSC attainment.

Roles and Responsibilities



Professional Learning

In addition to school based and a range of locally delivered and relevant Professional Learning, Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate will coordinate professional learning opportunities to support the implementation and coordination of the Aboriginal Learning an Engagement Centres, as required.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are a key requirement of this initiative. Ongoing student data collection will take place each term for the duration of the initiative.

Regular meetings to support AL&EC staff and schools and create support networks.

This will include but not be limited to; Student Attendance, Tell Them From Me and Retention Data, HSC Minimum Standard achievement rates, school planning and reporting and other negotiated school based data, monitoring and evaluation and reporting, as required.

Resources

- [School funding snapshots](#)
- [State Priorities – Premier’s Priorities](#)
- [Walking Together, Working Together: The Partnership Agreement between the Department and the NSW Aboriginal Consultative Group Inc.](#)
- [Aboriginal Education Policy](#)
- [National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy 2015](#)
- [Working with Aboriginal Communities \(NESA\)](#)
- [Henry Parkes Equity Resource Centre](#)
- [Community Consultation](#)

Contact

AOPCorrespondence@det.nsw.edu.au