

Aboriginal Education Committee

A guide to establishing an effective Aboriginal Education Committee

Overview

The guide to establishing an effective Aboriginal Education Committee has been designed to assist schools in setting up or reviewing an already existing Aboriginal Education Committee (AEC).

An active Aboriginal Education Committee can build whole school capacity in Aboriginal education. The benefits of establishing a committee includes the ability to strengthen connections to community and establish governance and processes for decision making, ensuring that there is a shared responsibility for Aboriginal Education across the school.

A committee working collegially to implement the Aboriginal Education Policy and the Partnership Agreement between the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. (NSW AECG) and the Department can potentially increase Aboriginal student engagement, guide the inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives in the school, support improved learning outcomes, reinforce educational aspirations and contribute to the development of a cultural safe and responsive school environment.

When a committee is formed in genuine partnership with school executive, Aboriginal staff, non-Aboriginal staff, Aboriginal families, students, community and the Local AECG there is a collective vision and set of actions that support school planning and enables accountability.

Setting up an Aboriginal Education Committee

Step 1: Request involvement from the Local or Regional AECG, community and families to be involved from the establishment phase of an Aboriginal Education Committee. Empower Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people to actively participate in the education of their children and provide insight into community perspectives and local protocols.

Step 2: There should be an invitation to join the committee conveyed particularly to Aboriginal staff, Aboriginal students, Aboriginal families, Local AECG/relevant community organisations and/or Elders/community members.

All other staff members should feel welcome to join and actively contribute. Aboriginal Education Committees are inclusive of all people.

Step 3: Identify the vision statement for the committee. What does it hope to achieve strategically and how can it contribute to the School Excellence Plan (SEP) with consideration for the School Excellence Framework?

Step 4: Develop formalised processes and procedures, governance structure; designate roles and responsibilities within the committee (lead, secretary, family/community liaison, student leadership support, communication officer etc.) and sustainability plan for the longevity of the committee.

Step 5: Determine a regular meeting and reporting schedule and ensure that this is included on the school calendar.

Duties of the Aboriginal Education Committee

- Participate in school planning process.
- Facilitate professional learning – Aboriginal Education
- Support staff to embed Aboriginal histories, cultures and perspectives in whole school practices.
- Personalised Learning Pathway organisation and management
- Developing and monitoring an Aboriginal Student leadership group and/or Junior AECG (led by Local AECG)
- Be a representative at Local AECG and/or other community organisations.

- Organise NAIDOC Day celebrations & other relevant days of celebration.
- Facilitate Connecting to Country opportunities.
- Ensure that there is Elder and Community engagement and consultation.
- Coordinate Aboriginal Student mentoring.
- Provide a support network for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff.
- Assist in the school planning and situational analysis process.
- Contribute to relevant data analysis.
- Actively promote the role and function of the Committee both inside and outside of the school
- Promote participation opportunities to students, families, staff and community.

**These are suggestions of potential strategies and initiatives that the Aboriginal Education Committee could lead and participate in, however these can be contextualised based on the individual school.*

Aboriginal Education Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Table 1 – Aboriginal Education Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Principal	The Principal has the responsibility to ensure that there is an active Aboriginal Education Committee functioning within the school with adequate representation from relevant groups. They are responsible for the sustainability of the committee and allocation of requested resources.
Executive Staff	There should be representation from executive staff on the committee who are responsible for the roles of the Principal in their absence.

Roles	Responsibilities
Lead – Aboriginal Education Committee	<p>The lead is responsible for ensuring the duties of the Aboriginal Education Committee are performed. They will allocate and oversee the various duties performed by the committee, lead regular meetings and ensure that there is a collegial working environment.</p> <p>They should promote role and function of the committee and ensure various groups are welcomed to participate.</p> <p>This person should be a staff member, be a representative on the executive team and lead whole school initiatives such as the Personalised Learning Pathways process.</p>
Aboriginal Staff	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff should feel empowered to actively participate in the decision making relevant to the Aboriginal Education Committee and support the duties to be performed.
Aboriginal Families Representation	Aboriginal families of the schools should feel that they can voice their opinions, advice and concerns, be active members in the decision-making process and support the duties to be performed if they desire.
Aboriginal Student Representation	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students should feel that they can voice their opinions, advice and concerns, be active members in the decision-making process and support the duties to be performed if they desire.
Local AECG and/or other community organisations	They should be active in the authentic collaboration process and support where contextually appropriate. The Department will work with in partnership with the AECG to ensure effective consultation occurs with Communities at the local level.
Other staff/allies in Aboriginal Education	Support the functioning of the Aboriginal Education Committee, actively contributing to the various duties or activities.

Roles	Responsibilities
	In secondary schools there should be representatives from each faculty. In primary schools there should be representatives from each stage.

**These are suggestions of potential roles and responsibilities of the Aboriginal Education Committee, however, these can be contextualised based on the individual school.*

Aboriginal Education Committee

Self-reflection

Overview

The Aboriginal Education Committee Self-reflection has been designed to guide schools to review their processes for the establishment or review of an existing Aboriginal Education Committee (AEC).

How to complete the Self-reflection

To facilitate the completion of this Self-reflection, the Principal, teaching staff, AEO, the school Aboriginal Education Committee (if already established) Local AECG and/or other relevant parties will collaboratively:

1. Complete the Self-reflection by having the Principal discuss each reflection question and all parties will collaboratively respond Yes/No for required questions or record any reflections and comments if relevant. If required, the Principal can ask prompting questions and encourage the Committee to reflect on what evidence could be provided to support the determination for each question. The evidence which has been included in the Self-reflection is only a sample, and alternate evidence may be available for the school.
2. Discuss the overall findings from completing the Self-reflection and how it will be used to further develop and improve the current Aboriginal Education structures within the school.

* Alternative names may already be used within the school, such as schools Aboriginal Education Team

Self-reflection of Aboriginal Education Committee

Reflection Questions		Sources of evidence that could provide insight	Please circle the relevant box		Comments
Establishing an Aboriginal Education Committee	Do we have an Aboriginal Education Committee?	<i>Meeting minutes, SEP and IPMs</i>	No	Yes	
	Do we have executive staff as active members of the Aboriginal Education Committee?	<i>List of staff, families, community members and students involved.</i> <i>Records of meeting attendance</i> <i>SEP, IPMs & SPaRO</i>	No	Yes	

Reflection Questions		Sources of evidence that could provide insight	Please circle the relevant box		Comments
	Do we have teaching staff as active members of the Aboriginal Education Committee?				
	Do we have Aboriginal identified staff as active members of the Aboriginal Education Committee?		No	Yes	
	Do we have Aboriginal families and community members of the Aboriginal Education Committee?		No	Yes	
	How are families and community invited to become members of the Aboriginal Education Committee?		Reflections:		
	Do we have students as active members of the Aboriginal Education Committee?		No	Yes	

Reflection Questions		Sources of evidence that could provide insight	Please circle the relevant box		Comments
	How are students provided with the opportunity to participate in the Aboriginal Education Committee and actively voice their opinions/suggestions?		Reflections:		
	Where relevant do we have specialist and/or program staff such as the AEO or other Aboriginal staff that may be delivering services and programs within the school?		No	Yes	
	Do we have local and/or regional AECG representatives as active members of the Aboriginal Education Committee?		No	Yes	
	If relevant, have departmental support staff been approached to support the establishment e.g., Aboriginal Education Strategic Delivery Advisor and/or Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer.	<i>Record of contact</i>	No	Yes	

Reflection Questions		Sources of evidence that could provide insight	Please circle the relevant box		Comments
	Is a percentage of equity funding utilised for initiatives developed and implemented by the Aboriginal Education Committee?	<i>SBAR and EfPT SEP & IPMs</i>	No	Yes	
	Do we have a documented process to monitor and evaluate outcomes for the Aboriginal Education Committee?	<i>Record of process IPMs and school reporting</i>	No	Yes	
	What are the documented processes used to develop, communicate and monitor initiatives developed by the Aboriginal Education Committee?	<i>Record of process Communication strategies e.g., newsletter, social media</i>	Reflections:		
	What measures are in place to ensure the sustainability and functioning of the committee?	<i>Record of process and succession planning</i>	Reflections:		

Reflection Questions		Sources of evidence that could provide insight	Please circle the relevant box		Comments
Role of the Aboriginal Education Committee	Does the Aboriginal Education Committee participate in the school planning process?	<i>Records of meeting attendance</i>	No	Yes	
	Are the Aboriginal Education Committee involved in the identification, development and delivery of PL?	<i>Record of process SEP and IPMs</i>	No	Yes	
	Does the Aboriginal Education Committee participate in the PLP process?		No	Yes	
	How does the Aboriginal Education Committee support the PLP process across the school	<i>Record of process SEP and IPMs</i>	Reflections:		
	Do the Aboriginal Education Committee implement and support community engagement strategies?	<i>Meeting records of AEC & community attendance</i>	No	Yes	

Reflection Questions		Sources of evidence that could provide insight	Please circle the relevant box	Comments
	What role does the Aboriginal Education Committee have in building trusting relationships between the school, student and families?	<i>Families and student voice</i> <i>surveys and feedback</i> <i>TTFM</i>	Reflections:	
	How are the initiatives/ strategies and objectives of the Aboriginal Education Committee communicated to the broader school staff?	<i>Record of communication and process</i> <i>School newsletter and social media</i>	Reflections:	
	What role/strategies do the Aboriginal Education Committee have in supporting Aboriginal staff?	<i>Record of process</i> <i>PL opportunity and cultural safety process</i>	Reflections:	

Reflection Questions		Sources of evidence that could provide insight	Please circle the relevant box	Comments
	How does the Aboriginal Education Committee support culturally safe and responsive school environments?	<i>Record of process and strategies e.g., junior leadership opportunities, PL cultural safety and responsiveness, cultural spaces</i>	Reflections:	
	How does the Aboriginal Education Committee support teachers to embed Aboriginal histories, culture and perspectives in the classroom?	<i>Registrations and teaching and learning programs.</i> <i>PL participation reports</i>	Reflections:	
	How does the Aboriginal Education Committee promote Aboriginal histories, culture and perspectives across the school?	<i>Record of process and strategies</i> <i>Communication and social media,</i>	Reflections:	

Reflection Questions		Sources of evidence that could provide insight	Please circle the relevant box	Comments
		<i>cultural visibility</i> <i>Committee is an agenda item for exec/staff meetings</i>		
Community engagement	Has the Aboriginal Education Committee process, structure and initiatives been collaboratively developed with the Local and/or Regional AECG?	<i>AECG minutes</i>	Reflections:	
	Has the Aboriginal Education Committee process, structure and initiatives been collaboratively negotiated with the local school community?	<i>Feedback from members of the community</i> <i>AEC Meeting attendance register</i>	Reflections:	
	How does our Aboriginal Education Committee strengthen the link between school and community?	<i>Feedback from members of the community</i>	Reflections:	

Reflection Questions		Sources of evidence that could provide insight	Please circle the relevant box	Comments
		<i>AEC Meeting attendance register, family and community attendance at school events</i>		
Evaluation Summary	Based on the responses above are there aspects of our current Aboriginal Education Committee that you have identified for improvement?	Comments:		

Self-reflection completed by: _____ Date completed: _____

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