



Aboriginal Advisory Body Communique 1

Meeting 1, 24 November 2023

The meeting was attended by the Director General, Lisa Rodgers (Co-Chair), the Department's Principal Advisor, Kevin O'Keefe, and Members of the Aboriginal Advisory Body (AAB): Tamara Murdock (Co-Chair), Daniella Borg, Bart Pigram, Tony Lee, Shannon McNear, Tyrone Garstone, and Dr Lilly Brown.

The AAB and Department of Education expressed a commitment to transparent communication and working together to achieve shared priorities. Senior Department of Education executives presented to the AAB, including:

- Raechelle Lee, Executive Director, Strategy and Policy outlined the Department's strategic objective to support Aboriginal students to succeed as Aboriginal people. Raechelle shared the Department's system wide approach to school improvement architecture and key initiatives and reforms.
- Melesha Sands, Deputy Director General, Schools, presented on the Schools division's role in managing schooling operations across public schools in Western Australia. The division is responsible for eight education regions, each with a Director of Education performing key functions.
- Lisa Criddle, Acting Deputy Director General, Student Achievement, presented on the Student Achievement division, which serves as the support arm for schools, with its primary focus on ensuring that schools receive the right support when and where they need it.

Key areas of focus

The AAB considered the current education experience of Aboriginal students, their parents and carers, and communities. The Department of Education shared information relating to Aboriginal student outcomes including enrolment and attendance rates across all regions.

The discussions led the AAB identifying emerging themes for further investigation, including:

The role of early childhood education in setting Aboriginal students and families up for success

- Stories of the positive impact of early childhood education were shared leading the AAB to request further information to understand the key levers of success that can be leveraged to better support Aboriginal families and increase engagement.

Improving school curriculum to better reflect the experience and histories of Aboriginal people

- The AAB explored the role of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority as an independent statutory authority. The AAB discussed opportunities for members to

engage in the HASS curriculum review to ensure truth-telling informs how Australia's history is taught to all students.

The role of Full-Service Schools in supporting Aboriginal students, families, and communities to engage in education

- The AAB explored the Full-Service Schools model and its benefits to Aboriginal students, families, and communities to drive improved education outcomes. The AAB noted the importance of placing the students at the centre to ensure they are fully supported to engage in their education and success as Aboriginal people.

Growing the Department of Education's Aboriginal workforce to reflect the communities it serves

- The AAB discussed the important role of Aboriginal staff in administration, teaching, and Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer (AIEO) positions in driving positive outcomes for Aboriginal students, families, and schools. Discussions highlighted the need to build the pipeline of Aboriginal people working across the Department and schools, addressing the inherent complexity of roles in meeting school and community needs, and improving career opportunities and pathways.

Post Secondary School Success

- The Post Secondary School Expert Panel members Emeritus Professor Bill Loudon AM (Chair), Emeritus Professor David Andrich and Elizabeth Ritchie, Principal, Roebourne District High School presented on the Post Secondary School Pathways Review.
- The purpose of this discussion was to explore the range of pathway options and supports for Aboriginal students to support them to succeed and complete Year 12.

Members will next meet on 8 February 2024 to further discuss the identified key themes and develop the AAB's strategic priorities.