**Aboriginal Advisory Body**

Attachment 1

D23/0072289

**Terms of reference**

**Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands, seas, skies and waterways throughout Western Australia, acknowledging the connections to Country of Aboriginal Advisory Body (AAB) members, whilst also acknowledging the Country that our meetings are taking place on. The AAB pays its respects to all Elders past and present for their continuing strength and wisdom.

The Department of Education (the Department) recognises the significant role the AAB plays in the transformation of public education services to embed Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing into the organisation.

Use of the term ‘Aboriginal’ respectfully refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

**Background**

The Department is committed to building its cultural responsiveness; to work in ways that value the knowledge, expertise and perspectives of Aboriginal people, and create opportunities to work collaboratively with Aboriginal communities to determine aspirations and opportunities for students.

The AAB will:

* advise in the Department’s progress towards reconciliation and creating a culturally responsive education system to strengthen the wellbeing, engagement and achievement of Aboriginal students
* provide advice and guidance to the Department to support the creation of learning environments where Aboriginal students can succeed as Aboriginal people, where their cultural identity, wellbeing and engagement are at the centre of their learning experience and where culture can thrive.

**Purpose**

The AAB will:

* provide advice to the Department that builds on the strengths of Aboriginal students, families and caregivers to enable Aboriginal students to thrive academically, socially and culturally
* embed a system-level Aboriginal voice to provide advice to the Department on the provision of public education to Aboriginal students and the ongoing development of a culturally responsive education system
* strengthen the Department’s formal engagement and shared decision making with Aboriginal people
* play a key role in reshaping our systems and services to reflect the aspirations of Aboriginal families and students
* support embedding Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing into the organisation
* advise in the Department’s progress towards reconciliation and creating a culturally responsive education system.

**Governance and reciprocity**

The AAB is an independent Aboriginal voice to the Department and the Minister for Education. The AAB will be Co-Chaired by an AAB-nominated member and the Director General.

To enact and embody reconciliation and two-way dialogue, the Aboriginal Co-Chair may attend Corporate Executive meetings, at the invitation of the Director General. Key initiatives and outcomes of the AAB and Corporate Executive will be exchanged as required.

The AAB Co-Chairs will brief the Minister on strategic items as required.

The AAB will have a strategic link to other departmental advisory bodies across the public sector.

The following principles will guide the relationship between the Department and the AAB:

* Culturally safe
* Culturally responsive
* Truth-telling and truth-listening
* Healing
* Empowerment
* Respect
* Equity
* Partnerships
* Co-design.

**Membership**

The AAB will be comprised up to 11 members. It will be Co-Chaired by an Aboriginal Co-Chair and the Director General.

All members of the Group will comprise of Aboriginal people living in Western Australia.

* Co-Chair: Director General
* Co-Chair: Aboriginal Member 1
* Aboriginal Member 2
* Aboriginal Member 3
* Aboriginal Member 4
* Aboriginal Member 5
* Aboriginal Member 6
* Aboriginal Member 7
* Aboriginal Member 8
* Aboriginal Member 9
* Aboriginal Member 10

The Department is seeking members who fulfil the following criteria whilst also ensuring diversity of representation across Western Australia:

* an interest in public education
* an ability to provide insightful and cultural knowledge
* supportive of systems-change approaches
* committed to driving and representing the needs and aspirations of their communities
* strengths-based approaches
* valuing the diversity of perspectives and experiences of others
* advocacy for community and advocacy for culturally responsive change.

If the Director General is unable to attend, a member of the Department’s Corporate Executive will act as Co-Chair. Where the Aboriginal Co-Chair is unable to attend, an Aboriginal member will act as Co-Chair.

No other proxies are permitted.

**Key roles and responsibilities**

The key roles and responsibilities of AAB members will be to:

* provide strategic and cultural advice on the delivery of public education that meets the needs of students and families
* model culturally responsive approaches and lead discussions that strengthens the Department’s priority of building a culturally responsive organisation
* work in partnership with the Corporate Executive to provide advice in the delivery of education to Aboriginal students
* foster relationships and strategic partnerships with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and communities
* lead, drive and advocate for reconciliation and truth-telling, to build a reconciled public education system.

**Member expectations**

Member engagement and advice will be centered on:

* approaches that aim to strengthen the wellbeing, engagement and achievement of Aboriginal students
* valuing the diversity of perspectives and experiences
* innovative thinking
* collaborative approaches
* ecological ways of working and systems thinking
* advocacy for community.

**Secretariat**

The Department will provide the secretariat function for the AAB.

The Secretariat will:

* support AAB members in a culturally responsive way
* lead the coordination of AAB actions and initiatives
* provide meeting papers including agendas, items for discussion, and minutes to AAB members
* coordinate processes to appoint new members
* support internal and external communications of the AAB
* attend meetings to fulfil secretariat functions.

Agenda and papers will be provided to AAB members no less than one week prior to a meeting. Minutes will be distributed to AAB members within two weeks of a meeting.

**Terms of appointment**

AAB members will be appointed for a two-year term. To ensure continuity, the appointment process will be staggered. Members may have their appointment renewed prior to its expiration with the possibility of extension via approval from the Co-Chairs, however the second term shall not exceed a further two (2) years, not more than four (4) years in total.

An Aboriginal member of the Department’s Corporate Executive, in liaison with other senior Aboriginal public servants, will assess new memberships when vacancies arise and make recommendations on membership to the Director General.

Members of the AAB may resign via written resignation to the Co-Chairs.

A member’s term may be ceased at the discretion of the Co-Chairs on the basis that the member:

* has failed to attend and engage in regular meetings
* has breached the Department’s Code of Conduct
* has failed to undertake reasonable requests of the Co-Chairs in the performance of their role and member expectations
* or the Department determines that it is not in the public interest for the person to remain as a member of the AAB.

**Meetings**

The AAB will meet on a quarterly basis (4 times a year or once per school term). Meetings may be up to 1 day in length.

Meetings may occur in person, online, on and off Country, or out-of-session. Members will be renumerated for each meeting they attend.

A quorum is reached when 50% of AAB members and one Co-Chair are in attendance. Any matters requiring decisions will be decided by the majority of members present.

**Remuneration**

* All members will be paid a meeting fee by the Department for their Intellectual Cultural Property, in accordance with Public Sector standards.
* Members will not accept or demand any fee, reward, gratuity or gift of any other kinds than the meeting fees and relevant travel costs applicable to the AAB meetings.
* Accommodation, meals and travel incurred in relation to attendance of the AAB meetings and other official AAB engagements will be paid by the Department.
* Members using their own motor vehicles in relation to attendance at the AAB meetings and other official AAB engagements are entitled to claim an allowance at public service rates.
* Meals and refreshments will be provided by the Department during all AAB meetings.
* AAB members will not cause extra expense for the Department through inappropriate conduct.
* Members who are unable to attend meetings (in person or online) will not receive remuneration.

**Right to co-opt**

People with specialist knowledge and expertise may be co-opted to the AAB with prior approval of the Co-Chairs.

**Confidentiality**

The Co-Chairs will identify specific deliberations of the AAB which are considered confidential. Members are not to communicate or forward material regarding these specific matters without prior approval from the Co-Chairs.

Members may communicate with their networks on matters that are not identified by the Co-Chairs as confidential.

Members will maintain the integrity and security of information received. Members will act in accordance with the Department’s Code of Conduct.

**Conflicts of interest**

Members must declare any conflicts of interest. Any declared interest will need to be resolved to the satisfaction of the Co-Chairs prior to proceeding with the related matter.