Advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education:
An action plan for Queensland
The Department of Education acknowledges the traditional owners of the lands from across Queensland, and pays respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the cultures and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

A better understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures develops an enriched appreciation of Australia’s cultural heritage and can lead to reconciliation.

This is essential to the maturity of Australia as a nation and fundamental to the development of an Australian identity.

Acknowledgement of Country

Artist Josiah Omeenya, “Coral Beds Down Under”, Catalogue JO20110611, Lockhart River Arts Centre QLD
Education empowers futures
Education empowers people and changes lives. It also leads to better health, promotes equity and boosts economic growth.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to ensuring we deliver a quality education that empowers all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to make a great start and shape their own futures.

This Advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education action plan sets out the Government’s priorities for improving the early childhood and school education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students in Queensland.

This plan focuses and enhances the Department of Education’s efforts to close the gap, and will be enacted in accordance with the Statement of Commitment to reframe the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Queensland Government.

Building on the progress already made, we will provide greater access to early education, increased culturally appropriate support for students to succeed at school, strengthen connections with post-school pathways, and build the capability of teachers and school leaders to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

A key focus of this plan is on achieving excellence in education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students by celebrating, valuing and building on the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

During statewide consultations, Queenslanders confirmed their support for the directions outlined in the action plan. Queenslanders who joined the conversations were clear – aiming to achieve and deliver excellence in education will prepare Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students for a successful future.

Queenslanders also told us that genuine engagement and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is critical to implementing the action plan. Through this action plan we are determined to work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to achieve our long-term aspirations for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

By working together, the action plan will contribute to delivering a better and brighter future for Queensland’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students.

The Hon. Grace Grace MP
Minister for Education
Minister for Industrial Relations
Engage, educate, empower, excel

Department of Education
Advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education
Achieving improved early years and school education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students is a high priority for the Queensland Government. The Queensland Government remains firmly committed to closing the gap, and strongly supports efforts to meet national targets to improve life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

Queensland has achieved significant progress in early childhood and schooling outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. While our successes provide a solid foundation, we know there is more to be done to achieve excellence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students.

The Department of Education recently released its Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. This statement commits to deliver aspirational, educational, economic and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through:

- valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ cultures and histories
- providing opportunities for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people to thrive in their early years and achieve success in our schools
- valuing, including and supporting Aboriginal employees and Torres Strait Islander employees in our workplaces
- understanding transgenerational trauma and its impact on social and emotional wellbeing
- working with each community to understand their unique knowledge and interests.

Advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education: An action plan for Queensland will help to achieve these commitments, complement our efforts to close the gap and advocate for a focus on achieving excellence through empowerment.

Our call for action is ‘Engage, educate, empower, excel’. This presents a vision for Queensland about:

- ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students are engaged with learning
- every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and student achieving their full potential and achieving academic success
- recognising and building on the unique strengths Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students bring to their learning experience
- embracing and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, identities, languages, histories and traditions in learning environments so they are positive places of belonging and empowerment
- supporting high expectations of, and aspirations for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students
- raising the bar in teaching, learning and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, their families and communities
- empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students to shape their own futures
- building the cultural capability of our people and systems to deliver relevant and responsive services.

This plan capitalises on the progress we have already made, and outlines the actions we are taking now and into the future to deliver our vision for advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. It also acknowledges the conversation we have had with Queenslanders about what is important in improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students.

The tone of the action plan is refreshing. The focus on empowerment and achieving excellence is both inspirational and aspirational.

Early childhood provider

The empowerment model underpinning the draft action plan is clear, concise and self-explanatory, and gives a clear message that the aim is for excellence.

Written submission
Delivering our plan
The department will oversee the implementation of this plan in collaboration with the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Training Advisory Committee (QATSIETAC). QATSIETAC is a ministerial expert advisory committee comprising eight Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members, whose role is to provide independent expert and cultural advice to the education and training ministers and their departments on early childhood, school education and training matters affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We will monitor and report on our progress in implementing this plan and its impact on achieving our long-term aspirations for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, students and young people.

Our plan will have a key role in ensuring:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children make a great start in life and learning
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students are regularly attending school and stay engaged in education
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners achieve a level of literacy and numeracy that enables them to reach their full potential and achieve academic success
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are equipped with the skills, knowledge and qualifications they need to participate in Queensland’s growing economy
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students are prepared and confident to make successful transitions
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents, carers and students value and support education
- staff and services are culturally capable, and effective in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners.

The department will produce an annual report on early childhood and school education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students to monitor progress on implementation of the action plan, inform future actions and report progress against national targets.

Part of a larger effort by government

On 14 July 2019, the Queensland Government marked a historic milestone, launching the Tracks to Treaty – Reframing the Relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders (Tracks to Treaty) initiative. Tracks to Treaty has two elements under a shared goal of supporting communities to move from outcomes of surviving to thriving: implementing the Local Thriving Communities reform, and establishing the Path to Treaty in Queensland.

Local Thriving Communities is the Queensland Government’s response to the Queensland Productivity Commission’s inquiry into service delivery in the state’s 19 remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. Local Thriving Communities empowers communities to build on their strengths to deliver better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

Path to Treaty is the Queensland Government’s commitment to commence the journey towards negotiated treaties with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. It will ensure that the voices of all Queenslanders are heard in the treaty conversation and will benefit all by promoting reconciliation and shared pride in culture and heritage. This plan will be enacted in a way that supports this historic whole-of-government agenda. It will also support and leverage on Advancing education: An action plan for education in Queensland, as well as a range of other key departmental, whole-of-government and national initiatives related to improving the early childhood and education outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students.

In particular, it will assist with addressing:

- our commitments to building the cultural capability of our workforce and systems by implementing the Queensland Government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework
- recommendations from the Queensland Audit Office report on Education and employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- the objectives of the Queensland Government’s strategic approach to increasing the participation of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland’s economy under the Moving Ahead strategy
- the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in the child protection system by implementing key early years and school education initiatives detailed in Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families
- Queensland’s obligations under the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy.

Contributing to building Queensland’s future

Advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education: An action plan for Queensland contributes to the Queensland Government’s priorities to deliver a better future for all Queenslanders through:

- giving all our children a great start – by supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families to access quality early years services
- creating jobs in a strong economy – by ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are engaged, achieving at school and transitioning into further education, training or work
- being a responsive government – by building workforce and system capability, and partnering with key stakeholders to deliver responsive services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, students, their families and communities.
Advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education

- Making a great start: Engaging families and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's access and participation in early childhood education.
- Building capability: Supporting our staff and systems to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students.
- Equipped for the future: Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to complete Year 12 and transition to post-school pathways.
- Empowering approach: Enabling every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student to succeed, reach their full potential, and achieve academic success.
- Empowering approach: Partnering with key stakeholders to improve outcomes and deliver better services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students.
- Empowering approach: Give all our children a great start.
- Empowering approach: Create jobs in a strong economy.

Department of Education  Advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education
93.8% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were enrolled in a kindergarten in 2018 - up from 89.6% in 2016.

86.2% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents/caregivers agreed that their school encourages them to take an active role in their child or children’s education.

80.5% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 5 state school students met the National Minimum Standard for Reading in 2018 - up from 58.6% in 2008.

92.5% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 12 state school students remained in the state school system until Year 10 in 2018.

4978 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participating in higher education in Queensland in 2017 - more than double the 2255 students from 2008.

98.1% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 12 state school students graduated with either a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) or Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA) in 2018 - up from 42.1% in 2008.

956 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers in Queensland state schools – comprising 1.85% of all teachers.
Making a great start
Early years

Highlights

- Invest approximately $10 million per annum in 10 Early Years Places (Children and Family Centres)
- Support Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services to provide culturally appropriate learning environments
- Strengthen the capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators
Increased access and participation

We will increase access to, and participation in, kindergarten for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by:

- providing subsidies to support low- or no-cost access to kindergarten for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- partnering with the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health to promote kindergarten as a deadly choice and encourage pre-Kindy health checks
- supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability to access kindergarten and ECEC services to deliver inclusive programs as part of the Kindergarten Inclusion Support Scheme
- supporting ECEC services to provide culturally appropriate and welcoming environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families
- delivering integrated early education, health and family support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families by investing approximately $10 million per annum in 10 Early Years Places (Children and Family Centres)
- conducting statewide and local communications strategies to promote the importance of the early years for children’s development, and assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to access kindergarten in the year before school
- supporting kindergarten services in schools in identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to deliver quality kindergarten programs.

Improved transition to school

We will improve transitions to school for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by:

- supporting positive transitions into Prep with a focus on valuing and respecting the languages, cultures, histories and identities of families, through the Transition to School initiative
- promoting successful transition to school programs developed collaboratively with communities, families, early years services and schools.

Greater service and workforce capability

We will build the capacity and capabilities of the ECEC workforce to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by:

- developing and implementing strategies to increase the number of qualified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators in the ECEC sector
- continuing to develop the capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators through professional development programs
- providing scholarships and study support for educators to gain early childhood qualifications in priority-identified Queensland rural and remote communities, including discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- expanding the uptake and delivery of early childhood/children services qualifications by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the Remote Area Teacher Education Program.

Providing high quality ECEC that is responsive to the needs of individual children and their families can significantly boost students’ achievement levels in later schooling. 

OECD¹
Highlights

• Identify and support high-achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to achieve academic excellence
• Support schools to implement Aboriginal language and Torres Strait Islander language programs in collaboration with local communities
• Implement programs to improve engagement, participation and achievement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)
Engagement in education

We will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to remain engaged in education by:

- implementing engagement and development programs involving mentoring, coaching and sporting-related activities for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male and female students, in partnership with external providers
- implementing the Youth engagement plan to improve responses to children and young people who have disengaged or are at risk of disengaging from education
- expanding support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from remote communities to access secondary education in urban and regional locations, through Transition Support Services
- facilitating access to scholarships to assist in meeting expenses associated with school education and extracurricular experiences
- providing access to more student accommodation services in the Torres Strait Islands to enable students to continue their education in the region
- continuing to implement the Remote School Attendance Strategy in partnership with the Australian Government to lift school attendance in remote communities across Queensland.

Connections to culture

We will ensure learning connects with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and language by:

- developing culturally appropriate teaching and learning resources to support state schools to embed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority, and providing professional development to regions, schools and teachers
- supporting schools to understand and respond to the language backgrounds and language learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander EAL/D students by teaching Standard Australian English explicitly, actively and meaningfully
- working with the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority to revitalise and expand the uptake and delivery of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies General Senior Syllabus and short course on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages
- supporting schools to develop and deliver language programs in collaboration with their local communities and aligned to the Australian Curriculum’s Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages.

Support for students to succeed at school

We will enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to succeed at school by:

- targeting resources to lift the reading and numeracy outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander state school students in the early years (from Prep to Year 3)
- supporting high-achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander state school students in Years 4 to 9 by sustaining the Solid Pathways program
- developing leadership and academic skills of high-performing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Years 10 to 12 through participation in the Indigenous Student Ambassadors Network program
- identifying and supporting high-achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to access academic excellence programs in state secondary schools
- identifying and supporting students who speak English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D).

Participation and attendance within the education system is the key to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students building their knowledge and skills for future jobs.

Online survey respondent
Improved school performance

We will support state schools to implement best practice initiatives to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by:

- developing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student performance dashboard to support state schools and regions to effectively highlight priority areas for improvement
- supporting schools to develop and share evidence about what works in particular contexts, to promote learning and school improvement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- communicating to schools what evidence-based research supports as effective practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education
- establishing videoconferencing facilities in all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community schools to facilitate greater information sharing and communication
- appointing principal coaches to support principals in remote communities to lead improvement, innovation and change that lifts outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- ensuring strong, long-term leadership in remote community schools through reviewing remote school principalship
- providing dedicated regional coaches to build the capability of schools to meet the language learning needs of students who speak EAL/D.

Promoting STEM pathways

We will increase engagement, participation and achievement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in STEM by:

- recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander excellence and achievement in STEM through offering the Peter Doherty award category for Outstanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Senior STEM Student
- engaging regional STEM champions to implement targeted strategies aimed at lifting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander achievement and participation in STEM
- supporting teachers to embed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority into the delivery of the Australian Curriculum: Science
- supporting schools to participate in programs that link traditional knowledge and values to modern environmental science concepts and connect young people to land, waterways and sea
- delivering coding and robotics demonstrations and education sessions with high-achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in collaboration with the Department of Environment and Science
- partnering with universities to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in activities that will enhance STEM tertiary aspirations
- supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female students to participate in STEM by encouraging their participation in the annual STEM Girl Power Camp, and developing outreach activities suited to their local context.

Ensuring the next generation of Indigenous students receive the STEM skills needed from mainstream public schooling is critical to ensuring the development of Australian talent required for STEM jobs and Australia’s future competitiveness.

Paige, Hattam, Rigney, Osborne and Morrison²

— action targets remote locations
Highlights

- Case-manage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior students identified as being at risk of not receiving a QCE or QCIA at the end of Year 12
- Provide scholarships for aspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who want to study teaching
- Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior school students to transition to training or employment
Increased school completion

We will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families to assist students to complete Year 12 by:

- case-managing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander state school students in the senior phase of learning who have been identified as being at risk of not receiving a QCE or QCIA at the end of Year 12
- supporting QCE scholarships for eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 11 and 12 students in Queensland state schools, through the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation.

Supporting post-school options

We will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to successfully transition post-school by:

- creating opportunities for high-performing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to participate in university immersion days and enhanced studies programs designed to improve school performance and access to tertiary studies
- working with Queensland universities to improve the preparation, access and transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students into higher education
- ensuring every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 10 student develops a Senior Education and Training plan in partnership with their parents/carers to support their learning in Years 11 and 12 and post-school
- establishing a dedicated web presence and suite of resources to support schools, students and parents to make informed decisions.

Connections to training and skills

We will strengthen connections between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and post-school pathways by:

- supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior state school students to transition to training or employment as part of the Youth Employment Program, in collaboration with the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
- providing scholarships for aspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who want to study teaching at a Queensland university, through the Pearl Duncan Teaching Scholarships program.

"Those with Year 12 have a greater likelihood of continuing with further study, particularly in higher education, as well as entering the workforce.

Lamb, Jackson, Walstab and Huo³"

"Need to give kids information about what jobs are available earlier so path can be developed."

Regional consultation forum feedback

— action targets remote locations
Building capability
Workforce and systems

Highlights

- Identify and mentor emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school leaders
- Support career development and progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff
- Maximise opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to access Queensland Government procurement contracts
Support for teachers and school leaders

We will build the capability of teachers and school leaders to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners by:

• implementing targeted strategies to attract, prepare and support teachers in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

• developing the cultural capability of staff and pre-service teachers through the Centres for Learning and Wellbeing, and Rural and Remote Teacher Education Centres of Excellence

• encouraging teachers from Queensland metropolitan schools that have high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments to participate in a rural and remote teacher experience program

• developing a range of cultural capability resources to influence, measure and achieve a systematic cultural change across the regions and schools

• enhancing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through the continued implementation of the Crossing Cultures Intelligence professional development

• providing the Deadly Kids Can Listen and Learn online course for teachers, early childhood professionals and support staff to support the learning outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who experience conductive hearing loss as a result of otitis media

• delivering the EAL/D Hub online course as a key professional development activity for all staff working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Employment and career development opportunities

We will grow and develop the department’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce by:

• promoting the Department of Education as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and students

• contributing to the 3 per cent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment target for the Queensland Government by 2022

• supporting career development and progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff

• increasing the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in the department in teaching, classified teaching and senior management positions to 3 per cent

• identifying and mentoring emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school leaders through implementing the Aspiring Leaders program.

“I”

A key part of Advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education must be a focus on employment strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Such strategies must be comprehensive and focus on recruitment, retention and career progression.

Building systemic capability

We will build the capability of the system by:

• promoting cultural capability and awareness training for new starters and non-teaching departmental staff

• developing resources to measure, guide and enhance whole-school cultural change and the individual cultural capability of all staff members

• developing an engagement framework to enhance engagement between the Department of Education and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to improve outcomes

• recognising, celebrating and participating in significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural events

• contributing to the Queensland Government target of increasing the share of government procurement contracts awarded to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to 3 per cent by 2022

• building transition to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers and staffing into agreements on innovative education programs

• organising an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research symposium to promote awareness of research on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education issues.

Written submission
Engaging partners

Partnerships

Highlights

• Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents, Elders and families to play an active role in children’s education
• Implement the Deadly Kindies program in partnership with the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health to promote benefits of early childhood education
• Partner with Queensland Health, ECEC sector and state, Catholic and independent schools to minimise the impacts of middle ear disease
Strong engagement with parents, carers, families and communities

We will engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to improve outcomes and meet local needs by:

- supporting parents to play an active role in their children’s early development through initiatives like playgroups, Families as First Teachers, parents and citizens’ associations, and The Early Years Count and Elders as Storytellers campaigns
- piloting a strength-based, co-designed community education compact between schools and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- developing culturally appropriate information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and families about learning for students with disability
- facilitating local school-community forums and sharing school performance information with the community to enhance community collaboration and local decision-making
- piloting a school attendance model that will aim to empower local community decision-making, enabling students and families to actively participate to improve student outcomes.

Greater collaboration across government

We will collaborate across government to improve outcomes and coordinate services by:

- working with other key agencies to identify additional interventions and coordinate service delivery to achieve improved early years outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in youth detention centres to achieve their full potential, and ensuring quality education services by close ongoing collaboration between the Department of Education, Department of Youth Justice, and the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women.
- piloting a strength-based, co-designed community education compact between schools and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- developing culturally appropriate information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and families about learning for students with disability
- facilitating local school-community forums and sharing school performance information with the community to enhance community collaboration and local decision-making
- piloting a school attendance model that will aim to empower local community decision-making, enabling students and families to actively participate to improve student outcomes.

Greater communication, transparency and accountability

We will ensure ongoing consultation and communication with key stakeholders to achieve improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students by:

- working with the QATSIE TAC to monitor progress in implementing the action plan
- developing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education performance dashboard to increase the visibility of data on outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students
- developing a real retention measure for inclusion in the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education performance dashboard to better track the engagement of students from Years 10 to 12
- producing an annual report on early childhood and school education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students.

Partnerships between education and health

We will work collaboratively across the education and health sectors to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students can achieve their full potential by:

- promoting the importance of early childhood education through the Deadly Kindies project by partnering with the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health across southeast Queensland
- working to minimise the educational impacts of middle ear disease and associated hearing loss for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and school students, in cooperation with Queensland Health, the ECEC sector, state, Catholic and independent school sectors, and other key stakeholders
- working with allied health professionals and remote schools through initiatives including Be Well Learn Well to provide therapy-based services to address developmental vulnerability impacting on education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

“Empowerment ... can only be achieved through actively engaging our local communities and working in partnership with the key educational bodies.”

Indigenous teacher

Education and health are known to be highly correlated – that is, more education indicates better health and vice versa.

World Health Organisation

- action targets remote locations

Department of Education  Advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education: An action plan for Queensland  23
Stay connected

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www.indigenousportal.eq.edu.au

References


⁴ Suhrcke, M, de Paz Nieves, C (2011) The impact of health and health behaviours on educational outcomes in high-income countries: a review of the evidence. Copenhagen, WHO Regional Office for Europe, p. vi

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