

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education includes both the overall education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander* students and the education of all students about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, cultures and history. Access to quality education is a fundamental right, enjoyed by the vast majority of Australians, which in the past Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have not been able to enjoy to the same extent as other Australians.

- ▶ Education is fundamental in enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to exercise their rights and participate fully in Australian society.
- ▶ The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are themselves diverse and multi-cultural, with community and individual differences and varying needs.
- ▶ The learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are influenced by the values of their cultures and experiences.
- ▶ Consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is essential to the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education.
- ▶ The NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc.(AECG) is the principal consultative body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education in NSW and should be involved in all stages of policy development and implementation.
- ▶ Education has a key role to play in the process of reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Australasia.
- ▶ A knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, cultures and history is essential to a complete understanding of Australian society.
- ▶ Aboriginal education involves all students and all teachers at all levels of education.
- ▶ All teachers need to become aware of and sensitive to Aboriginal issues through both formal teacher training courses and in-service programs.
- ▶ All teachers should encourage opportunities for the involvement and participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in schools.
- ▶ Only in environments free from discrimination and harassment can students, teachers and other staff perform at their best.
- ▶ Individuals and groups should not be disadvantaged because of their race, culture, ethnicity, national or religious background.

An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is a person who identifies with and is accepted as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander by the community in which he or she lives

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION INITIATIVES SHOULD:

- ▶ Develop and implement appropriate teaching and learning strategies for Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students.
- ▶ Enable Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students to achieve high levels of participation and achievement in all stages of education.
- ▶ Promote self-esteem and self-confidence in Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students.
- ▶ Involve Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities in the design, delivery and review of educational services for all students.
- ▶ Make all students aware and respectful of the rights of different cultural groups to have different values and beliefs.
- ▶ Develop in all students a knowledge, an understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and their heritage.
- ▶ Ensure that all teachers receive adequate and appropriate pre-service and in-service training to develop their understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal issues and their ability to implement Aboriginal Education policies.
- ▶ Promote understanding in the wider community of the issues involved in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Professional Teachers Council NSW welcomes your comments regarding this Equal Opportunity Statement. If you believe that we have not adhered to this Statement, please contact us.