In 2008 and 2009 the Department of Education and Training and TAFE colleges developed a joint *Reconciliation Action Plan* (RAP) to build partnerships with Aboriginal Australians and improve education and training outcomes for all Aboriginal children and students. Since that time, new departments of Department of Education and the Department of Training and Workforce Development have been created. Each agency will report separately on implementation of the actions for which they are responsible.
MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

I am proud to present the Reconciliation Action Plan for the Department of Education and Training and TAFE colleges in Western Australia.

The plan reflects the State Government’s commitment to developing strong and effective partnerships with Aboriginal Western Australians based on mutual respect, understanding and an appreciation of and respect for Aboriginal history, heritage and cultures.

The plan identifies actions that will be taken by the Department and TAFE colleges to build partnerships with Aboriginal Australians and improve education and training outcomes for all Aboriginal children and students. It was developed in consultation with parents, Aboriginal communities and staff from regional, remote and metropolitan locations and is underpinned by the guiding principles of relationships, respect and opportunities.

Appreciation of and respect for Aboriginal history, heritage and cultures are central to reconciliation. We recognise Aboriginal Australians as the first peoples and traditional owners of Western Australia. We will provide opportunities for all staff and students to learn about the history and cultures of Aboriginal Australians and to celebrate their achievements.

Life-long learning through high quality education and training opportunities create pathways for independence, employment and life-long success. Positive relationships and genuine partnerships between families, communities, early learning and care providers, schools and training providers form the basis for maximising the attendance, engagement and achievement of Aboriginal children and students.

While gains have been made, there is still much to be done to ensure that Aboriginal young people achieve their potential. This plan provides the directions to ensure schools meet the needs and build on the strengths of Aboriginal students from the earliest years. It will help to close the achievement gap in education and training outcomes between Aboriginal students and their peers, increase employment and career pathways for Aboriginal staff, and improve the way in which we interact with and involve Aboriginal Australians and the wider community in education and training decision making.

SHARYN O’NEILL
DIRECTOR GENERAL
MISSION

To provide world-class education and training to meet the needs of individuals, the community and the economy of Western Australia.

VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

To close the achievement gap in education and training outcomes, enabling Aboriginal students of all ages to realise their full potential, make informed choices and access the range of life opportunities.

OUR APPROACH TO RECONCILIATION

We realise that education and training are keys to independence, employment and varied life opportunities. We will work towards reconciliation by strengthening our understanding of Aboriginal history, heritage and cultures. Schools and TAFE colleges will be responsive to the needs of Aboriginal students and develop strong and effective partnerships with Aboriginal families and communities.

While the educational outcomes of Aboriginal Western Australians have improved over recent decades, equity is yet to be achieved. The Department and TAFE colleges will close the education and training achievement gap between Aboriginal students and their peers. We will do this by increasing appreciation of and respect for Aboriginal history, heritage and cultures, creating culturally inclusive learning opportunities for students, improving employment and career opportunities for Aboriginal people, and enhancing the capacity of Aboriginal parents, caregivers and communities to be involved in education and training decision making.

We will:

- Ensure early learning and care centres, schools, district education offices, central office and the TAFE colleges are inclusive places to learn and work, where cultural differences are respected and valued.
- Meaningfully engage with Aboriginal communities to provide education and training opportunities that are relevant to them.
- Close the gap in education and training achievements between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The plan is underpinned by three principles:

Relationships
Partnerships between early learning and care centres, schools, training providers, families and communities provide a basis for maximising the attendance, engagement and achievement of Aboriginal children and students and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people.

Respect
Appreciation of and respect for Aboriginal history, heritage, language and culture are central to reconciliation.

Opportunities
Education and training opportunities create pathways for independence, employment and life long success.
OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The plan highlights the key focus areas and activities for the Department and TAFE colleges. These areas strongly link to and are explained more fully in the Department’s Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy 2009-2013, the Culture Strong, Career Proud, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2008-2010 and the TAFEWA Strategic Plan 2006-2010.

The following outlines how the Reconciliation Action Plan relates to these and other planning processes.

The Classroom First Strategy is the Department’s framework for future decision making and underpins our strategic planning, corporate structures, beliefs and commitment to quality public education.

The direction for the Department of Education and Training is described in the Strategic Plan 2007-2009 which identifies the priorities for delivering a world-class public education and training system throughout Western Australia. The plan helps us to manage and improve the Department’s structure, strategy and culture as we respond to the issues facing our diverse State and seek to achieve our goals.

The Plan for Public Schools 2008–2011 is a statement of our commitment to a strong public school system and sets the strategic direction for schools over the next four years. The Plan identifies the need for whole school approaches targeted at closing the achievement gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

The TAFEWA Strategic Plan 2006-2010 identifies the key priorities and strategies for vocational education and training. The priorities include addressing the diverse needs of young people as they make the transition from school to work.

The Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy 2009-2013 sets the strategic direction for accelerating education and training outcomes for Aboriginal people. The plan is based on nationally agreed objectives, priorities and targets.

The Culture Strong Career Proud: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2008-2010 is one component of our commitment under the Equity and Diversity Management Plan 2007-2010 to building an effective and motivated workforce that reflects our State’s population. Recruiting, supporting and valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and the knowledge and skills they possess, will contribute to student, school, college and community outcomes.
COMMUNICATION OF THE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

The following activities will be undertaken to ensure that all staff in the Department and TAFE colleges are aware of the plan and are committed to its implementation:

- **Promote and launch the plan to key Department and TAFE college staff**
  (e.g. Corporate Executive, State Executive, district administrator conferences).

- **Online availability**
  The plan will be posted on the Department’s intranet and internet sites and TAFE college sites. Online availability of the plan will be publicised in *School Matters*.

- **Inclusion in all staff induction programs**
  The plan will be featured in all induction programs and packages.

- **Ongoing promotion and support for the plan**
  Reviews of the plan will be undertaken. Outcomes will be posted on the Department’s intranet and internet sites and on Reconciliation Australia’s website.
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Our vision for reconciliation

To close the achievement gap in education and training outcomes, enabling Aboriginal students of all ages to realise their full potential, make informed choices and access the range of life opportunities.

Our business

Our goal is a strong public education and training system that earns the respect of the community for the quality of the education and training programs it offers.

The public education system will be strong if we work at making:
- children the focus of all that we do;
- every school a good school;
- every teacher an effective teacher; and
- every student a successful student.

The TAFE network will contribute to economic and community development by:
- providing vocational education and training opportunities to meet government priorities;
- meeting the needs of industry;
- responding to learner needs and preferences.

We want all our students to be well prepared for their future. Successful education and training experiences will equip them to be happy and secure in themselves, contribute to their communities and prosper economically. We believe in building on our students’ strengths so that children leave school and training confident that they can succeed.
Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Our plan identifies actions that the Department and TAFE colleges will undertake to improve the education and training outcomes for students. It has been developed in consultation with Aboriginal staff and stakeholders, regional and metropolitan school, district, central office and college staff and is underpinned by the guiding principles of respect, relationships and opportunities.

The process of developing the plan began with members of the Department’s Joint Executive developing a framework outlining what the Department could do to improve the way in which we engage students and the wider community and ensure we provide relevant education and training opportunities. TAFE colleges participated in a consultation phase and actively contributed to the development of the plan.

The Joint Executive group will oversee implementation of the plan and monitor outcomes. We will report on progress against milestones in our annual report and on the Reconciliation Australia website.

The plan is not a comprehensive list of everything early learning and care centres, schools or TAFE colleges are doing or need to do to narrow the achievement gap in education and training outcomes for Aboriginal students. Rather, it highlights the essential contributions we can make to enrich students’ lives and contribute to the achievement of reconciliation.
### 1. Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Measurable target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools* will build relationships that empower Aboriginal parents and caregivers to participate in their children’s schooling.</td>
<td>Schools Central Office</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>All schools with Aboriginal students have local strategies to increase the involvement of Aboriginal parents and caregivers in their children’s schooling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate Schools</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>Identified schools, with their Aboriginal community, have developed formal partnership agreements that articulate mutual obligations and expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure Aboriginal representation on key strategic committees.</td>
<td>Central Office District Offices Schools TAFE colleges</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>Committee structures are reviewed against aims and Aboriginal representation, where appropriate, is ensured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver culturally inclusive, place-based and flexible training that meets the specific needs of local communities.</td>
<td>TAFE colleges</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
<td>Training is delivered in consultation with Aboriginal Education, Employment and Training Committees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* includes early learning and care centres.
## 2. Respect

### Focus area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure all staff have access to and participate in professional</td>
<td>Workforce Policy and Coordination in partnership with districts</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>Staff at all sites undertake cultural awareness training by the end of 2010. Aboriginal employees are supported in the workplace through implementation of a workforce support program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development and cultural awareness programs to promote understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>of workplace diversity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schools, districts, TAFE colleges and central office create</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>Schools, districts, TAFE colleges and central office have strategies in place to acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal culture and days of significance and create environments that are welcoming and inclusive for Aboriginal people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environments that are welcoming and inclusive for Aboriginal people.</td>
<td>District Education Offices</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Central office</td>
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<td></td>
<td>TAFE colleges</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and implement culturally inclusive curricula and programs</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>All schools and TAFE colleges incorporate Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to meet individual student needs and improve academic performance.</td>
<td>West One</td>
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<td></td>
<td>TAFE colleges</td>
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</table>
### 3. Opportunities

#### Focus area

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implement employment strategies to recruit retain and increase the employment of Aboriginal people.</td>
<td>Workforce Policy and Coordination</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>Culture Strong, Career Proud: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2008 employment targets are met: 2.7% 3.0% Greater than 3% (OEEO targets)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate Aboriginal education and training objectives and targets for improvement in all school, district, central office and TAFE plans.</td>
<td>Central Office District Offices Schools TAFE colleges</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>All schools, district, central office and TAFE colleges incorporate objectives and targets for improvement of Aboriginal outcomes in their operational plans and monitor progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the achievement gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in literacy, numeracy, attendance and retention to Year 12.</td>
<td>Assessment and Reporting (K-12) Aboriginal Education and Training Schools</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
<td>Proportion of Aboriginal students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 achieving minimum standards in literacy and numeracy national testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Behaviour and Well Being Schools Aboriginal Education and Training Participation</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
<td>Proportion of Aboriginal students enrolled in and attending school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participation SASS VET in Schools Schools Aboriginal Education</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
<td>Proportion of Aboriginal Year 12 students with Year 12 Certificate or equivalent AQF Cert II attainment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Opportunities

#### Focus area

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve completion rates and participation at higher qualification levels at TAFE colleges.</td>
<td>TAFE colleges</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
<td>Proportion of 20 to 64 year olds with and working towards post-school qualifications in Cert III and IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TAFE colleges</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
<td>Completion rate for Aboriginal apprentices and trainees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve access to higher levels of training in rural and remote regions and strengthen training to employment outcomes for Aboriginal people.</td>
<td>TAFE colleges, Industry and Community Planning, Training Resource Allocation</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
<td>Localised strategies developed and implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve partnerships between training providers, industry and community-based agencies to increase access to employment for Aboriginal graduates.</td>
<td>TAFE colleges</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
<td>Proportion of Aboriginal TAFE graduates progressing to further study or employment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GOVERNMENT OF WA
- COMMONWEALTH / STATE AGREEMENTS
- BETTER PLANNING: BETTER FUTURES
- MINISTERIAL PRIORITIES
- PORTFOLIO BUDGET STATEMENT

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
STRATEGIC PLAN 2007 – 2009

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

CLASSROOM FIRST STRATEGY

PLAN FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2008 - 2010

VET PRIORITIES PLAN

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING STRATEGY
2009-2013

CULTURE STRONG CAREER PROUD
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY
2008-2010

TAFEWA STRATEGIC PLAN
2006 - 2010

SCHOOL & DISTRICT OPERATIONAL PLANS

COLLEGE OPERATIONAL PLANS