



## Australia – Canada Indigenous Education Policy Exchange

9-16 May 2011

The visit involved the following Canadian representatives:

- Gabrielle Christopherson, Education Manager, Aboriginal Policy Branch, Alberta Education
- Darryl Gervais, Director Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch, Manitoba Education
- Pamela Hine, Deputy Minister of Education, Government of Yukon
- Leo La France, Assistant Deputy Minister, Services to the English-speaking community, Aboriginal affairs and Plan North, Government of Quebec
- Kyle Lambier, Policy Analyst, Policy and Advocacy Branch, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
- Kathy Okpik, Deputy Minister, Department of Education, Government of Nunavut
- Claudette Russell, Senior Director, Education Policy and Planning, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

The visit was coordinated by Australian Education International, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), working with the Council of Minister's of Education Canada (CMEC) and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

### Visit Summary and Outcomes

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#### Sydney - Monday, 9 May 2011

##### *Meeting DEEWR NSW State Manager*

Discussion focused on:

- Overview of Federal Department Ministers and DEEWR structure.
- Overview of the DEEWR NSW state office.
- Overview of the PaCE program and the focus of Indigenous Education and Employment Programs with a particular focus on: sports, arts and community based programs; as well as programs associated with parental support of students to stay in school.
- Overview of Closing the Gap and targets. <http://www.aihw.gov.au/closingthegap/>
- Overview of apology. <http://www.abc.net.au/tv/apology/>
- Overview of Reconciliation: Sorry day, Reconciliation week and NAIDOC week.
- Overview of My School website including how schools are funded and the number of Indigenous schools. <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>
- Overview of the national curriculum. <http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/curriculum.html>
- Comparisons by the delegation were shared in relation to the 'Residential School Apology'. <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/rqpi/apo/index-eng.asp>

##### *Meeting NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group*

The delegation were greeted with a traditional smoking ceremony to welcome them onto the land of the NSW AECG and to ward off any bad spirits.

Discussion focused on:

- Overview of the NSW AECG, including its role, structure and governance arrangements. <http://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au/>
- Overview of the formal Partnership Agreement between the NSW AECG and the NSW Department of Education & Training. <http://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au/partnership-agreement.html>



- Overview of the Connecting to Country Program that is funded through the 'Closing the Gap - expansion of intensive literacy and numeracy programs for underachieving Indigenous students' budget measure.

#### *Meeting Cathie Burgess and Lyn Riley, University of Sydney*

Discussion focused on initiatives operated out of the Koori Centre:

- Runs programs specifically for Aboriginal students
- Conducts courses via block mode full-time study
- Offers a Master of Indigenous Languages Education
  - This course has three exit points – Graduate Certificate; Diploma & Masters Degree
  - Also operates as a language revival program with students from across Australia
- The Koori Centre also supports a summer school program where local language groups teach units – Wiradjuri, Gamilaraay & Gumbaynggirr
  - Most students already teaching language but use this as a professional development opportunity
  - There is no financial incentive from NSW DET for students to participate
  - Focuses on effective language teaching methodologies
- Indigenous education as part of the pre-service teaching program
  - Recognition that mandatory units poorly taught in schools at present
  - Expectation currently that history be taught in a 12 week period
  - Building an understanding of teachers the importance of engaging the community
- Discussion on the NSW DET Aboriginal Education Review and how student data from this was used to force change to pre-service training program
  - Copy of review document to be shared with delegation.
- Establishing learning circles for teachers
- Possible Aboriginal education linkages with Canadian universities such as University of Prince Edward Island.
- Yukon Territory have commenced pairing teachers with community Elders
- Canada have begun to deal with de-colonisation
- Canada have introduced a three-tiered pay structure for teachers

#### *Meeting Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate*

- A 'show and tell session' involving Aboriginal students from Western Sydney who participate in the Twugia Program. It included presentations and short film re-creations by students on the stolen generation.
- Students demonstrated their science skills with everyday household items and performed some experiments with assistance from the Canadian representatives.
- The Coolabah Dynamic Assessment was also briefly mentioned as a tool used to identify participating students as 'gifted under-performers'.

#### **Perth - Tuesday, 10 May 2011**

#### *Meeting with Chair of Western Australian Aboriginal and Education Training Council and the Deputy Director of Education*

Discussion focused on:

- Overview of Canadian and WA relationships.
- Overview of Aboriginal Education in WA, which is predominately remote.
- Overview of *Native Title Act 1993* <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2005C00485>  
*Native Title Amendment Act 1998* <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2004A00354>
- Overview of WA demographics, including the Aboriginal population:
  - 70% of Aboriginal people receiving welfare payments
  - Children are at least two years behind non-Aboriginal children in education by year 3 - this can be due to poverty, culture and impacts of government policies.



- Main three barriers are: Difference in language, poverty including high rates of hearing loss due to health issues, and irregular attendance.
- Only 35% of Aboriginal children attend more than 90% of days.
- In 2002 only two Aboriginal students received direct entry to University, in 2010 that had increased to 45 out of 400 overall.
- Establishment of Children and Family Centres – connecting 0-3 year olds with schools  
<http://www.kateellis.com.au/newsroom/261/>
- Overview for the 'Follow the Dream' program. Program is currently running in 40 schools with approximately 1000 children. Receives approximately \$150,000 in funding per centre with \$4 million in funding from the business sector.  
<http://www.whatworks.edu.au/dbAction.do?cmd=displaySitePage1&subcmd=select&id=140>
- Overview of the National Education Agreement and the National Indigenous Reform Agreement.  
[http://www.coag.gov.au/intergov\\_agreements/federal\\_financial\\_relations/index.cfm](http://www.coag.gov.au/intergov_agreements/federal_financial_relations/index.cfm)
- Overview of COAG and initiatives. [http://www.coag.gov.au/about\\_coag/index.cfm](http://www.coag.gov.au/about_coag/index.cfm)
- Overview of WA 'Independent' public schools  
<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/independentpublicschools/detcms/portal/>
- Overview of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan  
[http://www.mceetya.edu.au/verve/resources/IEAP\\_Stage\\_Two\\_Consultation\\_Draft\\_\(2\).pdf](http://www.mceetya.edu.au/verve/resources/IEAP_Stage_Two_Consultation_Draft_(2).pdf)

#### *Visit to Roseworth Primary School*

Discussion focused on:

- Overview of school including:
  - School make-up
    - Low SES and multicultural – ESL students
    - Approximately 25% Aboriginal students
    - Just over 20% African students
    - Approximately 10% Vietnamese
    - Class sizes are around 25 students per class
  - Edith Cowan University (ECU) developed a facility classroom and observation room for pre-service teaching on the site. The facility also has filming capabilities.
  - ECU pre-service teachers come to the school two days a week for practical teaching and then for a four week block and concentrate on teaching techniques. The school is promoting teacher collaboration and well as developmental group work
  - Practical sessions for other professions such as Occupational and Speech therapy students are also done at the school.
  - Services in classroom management and behavioural management are also provided.
  - School has a health and dental clinic with a nurse on site two days per week.
  - The school has obtained ATAS funding for ESL and Aboriginal Education
  - Playgroup operates for 0-3 year old children one day per week
  - School has a Curriculum Manager on staff
  - Smith Family worker operates out of the school site.

#### *Visit to Lockridge Senior High School*

Discussion focused on:

- *Follow the Dream* program.  
<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/aboriginaleducation/detcms/navigation/teaching-and-learning/attendance-and-retention/follow-the-dream/>
- Classroom presentations on *Follow the Dream* within a Maths and Science setting – observing how the program supports Aboriginal students.



### *Visit to Challis Early Childhood Centre*

<http://www.challisecec.wa.edu.au/>

Discussion focused on:

- Overview of the school:
  - 20% of children are Aboriginal
  - 150 students at educational risk
  - 60 children in foster care
  - 70 children have been referred to the Department of Child Protection.
  - Up to 50% of children require speech therapy.
  - Kartajin Danjoo – learning together program
    - Undertake home visits
    - Group siblings together
    - Attendance grew from 63% to 89% by the end of the project
  - Have readiness programs for 0-3 age group
  - School has a child health nurse as 70% of the children do not have their immunisation up to date.
  - Partnership with Curtin University for forth year students in speech therapy, child psychology etc to undertake practical experience within the school.
- Students receive an individual plan or PIP which then determines the personal development for each child.
- Brief overview of AEDI. [http://www.rch.org.au/aedi/index.cfm?doc\\_id=13051](http://www.rch.org.au/aedi/index.cfm?doc_id=13051)
- Brief overview of the National Quality Framework [http://www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood/policy\\_agenda/quality/pages/home.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood/policy_agenda/quality/pages/home.aspx)
- In Manitoba it was recently announced that all school renovations and new buildings must include an early childhood room.

### *Meeting with Professor Colleen Hayward, Director for Congress of Australia's First Peoples and Director of Kurralong Katitjin Aboriginal Centre at Edith Cowan University*

Discussion focused on:

- No longer offer degrees through the centre, focus is on teaching units within other degrees
- Pathways to entry and a bridging course as an entry option. They can also develop plans that meet individual specific needs with personal learning plans – a personal compact. These plans also look at the living arrangements context of the students.
- Masters and PhD in Aboriginal Studies.
- Endeavouring to get Aboriginal Studies teaching into other faculties.
- Receive some higher education funding for projects and programs.
- Looking at private sponsorship to undertake research.
- Looking at copyright issues to protect traditional knowledge.
- Developing standards that respect ownership – Colleen to provide draft paper.
- Have the 25 students from the *Follow the Dream* program where they provide tutoring. A number of students then go on to undertake further study at the university.
- Questions raised by delegation:
  - Does the University have a true Aboriginal philosophy?
  - How do you protect traditional knowledge?
  - How do you get Aboriginal people into programs where funding isn't the issue?

### **Wednesday, 11 May 2011**

#### *Meeting with DEEWR WA State Manager*

- Breakfast meeting held with general discussion between Mr Brahim and delegation members which focused on opportunities for Aboriginal people across Western Australia in education and employment.



## Alice Springs - Thursday, 12 May 2011

### *Visit to Bradshaw Primary School*

Discussion focused on:

- Brief overview of NAPLAN testing. Yr 3 and Yr 5 students were doing the tests on the day of the visit. They have seen an increased growth in improvements about the national average.  
<http://www.naplan.edu.au/>
- Overview of the school:
  - The school has approximately 380 students with 50% of these being Aboriginal.
  - They have a unit for approximately 65 Aboriginal children - Irrkerlantye. These are children from town camps and from disadvantaged backgrounds. The unit provides a strong wrap around service including a specific service for the welfare of these children. The school provides, showers, clothing, shoes, meals and hearing checks etc.
  - The school is not just concerned about the academic achievement of children but also student welfare. Their main aim is to transition Aboriginal children into the mainstream.
  - ESL methodology is imbedded into the teaching philosophy as there are high level of Aboriginal and migrant children where English is their second or third language.
  - There is a high level of transientness within the community.
  - The school has a community partnership agreement and includes things like attendance.
  - They hold a family day once a term to encourage parents to come to the school. This has been ongoing for the past five years. It is to celebrate children's learning and to provide information to parents about the teaching and learning programs while also providing a forum to discuss issues such as attendance.
  - They run a survey of parents every two years but were not able to elaborate on what number of these responses were from Aboriginal parents.
  - Attendance rate is around 87.9% for the school and approximately 83% for Aboriginal students.
  - School provides long-day preschool as well as a sessional option. Child care in the area is very expensive and this provides for a less expensive option. The preschool has a readiness program to prepare children for the formal school environment.
  - Although Bradshaw does not have any playgroups it is aware that other schools do have them as well as mobile preschool. These aim to have an integrated model for 0-3 age group.
  - Specific training is provided for teachers on how to work with children who have suffered severe trauma.

### *Visit to Alice Springs School of the Air*

<http://www.assoa.nt.edu.au/>

Discussion focused on:

- Overview of the school:
  - The school has 120 students
  - 25% of students are Aboriginal
  - The school conducts between 60-70 lessons per week
  - Maximum class size is 12-13 students
  - It caters for preschool, transition, Yr 1 and Yr 2 – all who participate in mainstream lessons.
  - Yrs 3 to 5 only participate in extra curricula activities such as assemblies and music.
  - Offers middle school level of Yr 6 and Yr 7.
  - Students then go to boarding school or learn via correspondence as the school does not cater for high school aged children.



- When a student enrolls they are provided a box of curriculum resources, within two months they are connected electronically which then complements the written materials.
- There is only one family near the Qld border that cannot access video conferencing.
- The school covers all costs. There is no cost to families for a computer, scanner, headset, mic, printer, internet access, paper based materials and all the curriculum books etc.
- Each class has a teacher and each family is encouraged to have a home teacher (tutor) on site to deliver daily lessons.
- The school covers a range of 1.3 million kms.
- Children have a face-to-face meeting with their teachers twice a year.
- Tutors are either a parent or an employee contracted by parents (parents cover the cost of this).
- Parents, students and teachers have family days three times a year and the school does provide some nominal funding to families to assist them to attend these days. Some parents have to travel 250 – 600kms.
- The school changed to a two-way satellite system in 2003 previous to this all instruction was via radio.
- The system does have limitations such as the weather but all children have set work to complete so learning continues regardless. There are online and paper based resources.
- Government funding per child is approximately \$3,500.
- Participated in a joint session between Alice Springs and the school at Jabiru with Aboriginal children. Viewed story time and joint interaction between the two classes.
- Strong interest from the Canadians in the software designed to run the school system is called React developed by Michael Wilson <http://www.darwinnt.biz/>

## **Darwin - Friday, 13 May 2011**

### *Visit to Gunbalanya*

#### Visit involved:

- Quick tour of the town.
- Visit to the preschool.
- Visit to the 'Parents as First Teachers' Program– as formal education is not compulsory until the age of six some parents do not send their children to the preschool. So parents with younger children are encouraged to bring some older siblings, if not in preschool, along to the playgroup. There is a teacher at the playgroup that introduces some learning concepts.
- Visit to the school that included morning tea with staff and visits to various classrooms
- Three to Nine program – staff run some adult learning – nutrition only using locally available ingredients, dance and exercise classes etc from 3-9pm after school hours. As the school is in a very remote location there are not many social activities for the children and parents. The 3-9 program offers the community activities they wish to do after the school day ends.
- Clontarf Program supporting boys <http://www.clontarffootball.com/>
- Girls Academy Basketball program similar to what is done with Clontarf with boys.
- Work Ready Skills program including work experience. Also looks at VET opportunities at the ERA mine and as a Ranger. The program assists in assisting students to take VET courses and work placements. The skills advisor keeps contact with the students for many years after they leave school.
- Batchelor Institute programs in the area [https://www.batchelor.edu.au/file/webpage/about\\_history.html](https://www.batchelor.edu.au/file/webpage/about_history.html)
- Art Centre visit – Women and Men use the location to weave traditional baskets and paint. Older children also spend some of their Fridays learning traditional skills. The Art Centre also has a small store where goods are sold.
- Cultural event – traditional dance from community members and parents.



- The school is more than just an education facility, it is the core community hub.
- It was noted by one of the Canadian delegates the difference in the children's behaviour and attitude between when they were in the classroom to when they participated in traditional dance.

#### *Meeting with DEEWR NT State Manager*

Discussion focussed on:

- Statistics within the territory as well as national comparisons:
  - The average age of NT residents is 31 years.
  - It has the largest population of Indigenous people in remote and very remote locations.
  - Aboriginal people have a much shorter life expectancy
  - Aboriginal people tend to have a family much younger than the non-Aboriginal population.
  - Biggest issue is school attendance.
    - Attendance in Darwin is about 80% where in very remote it is about 57% where they are missing more than two days.
    - Attendance in the early years is very good but drops significantly when children are around 10-12 years of age. One factor for boys is 'initiation'; once they become men they no longer feel as though they need to go to school.
  - Teacher levels are based on attendance rates plus 10%
  - Average teacher stay is 8 months
  - Huge mobility issues and this is on a cycle and can partly be attributed to the seasons.
  - School nutrition programs operate but only work when it is conducted in the schools
  - There are 50 homeland schools in the NT. <http://www.det.nt.gov.au/>
  - By 2020 the Indigenous population will account for 50% of the NT population.
- In the Nunavut Territory of Canada they have 25 very remote communities with 10 only accessible by plane. They all deliver Bachelor level training and teachers who speak the local language receive a monetary bonus. If a teacher owns their own home, they receive a rebate. The Inuit communities also have a focus on experimental land based learning.

#### *Dinner with representatives of the Catholic Education Office*

- General discussion on the Northern Territory Catholic Education Office programs in Indigenous Education and included several Aboriginal leaders from remote schools.

#### **Saturday, 14 May 2011**

#### *Meeting with Professor Sharon Bell, Vice Chancellor, Charles Darwin University*

Discussion focused on:

- Most Indigenous students are studying a Certificate I or Certificate II level course. <http://www.aqf.edu.au/AbouttheAQF/AQFQualifications/tabid/98/Default.aspx>
- CDU does provide a Foundation course pathway. <http://www.cdu.edu.au/indigenous/index.html>
- It also provides bridging units for Yr9 - Yr12 students to give them a taste of university;
- Have more VET and professional based units eg: land management for Rangers or Junior Rangers Program.
- CDU has developed a Northern Cultures unit. Indigenous studies at Undergraduate, Masters and PhD levels. Most research is in the Health and Environmental studies areas.
- CDU's mobile adult learning units (MALU) and Teaching From Country model.
- Mawul Rom – Cultural based learning [http://stapps.cdu.edu.au/pls/apex/f?p=100:32:352940846380725::NO::P32\\_SEARCH\\_COURSE,P32\\_SEARCH\\_YEAR,P32\\_SEARCH\\_VERSION:MIKMR,2011,1](http://stapps.cdu.edu.au/pls/apex/f?p=100:32:352940846380725::NO::P32_SEARCH_COURSE,P32_SEARCH_YEAR,P32_SEARCH_VERSION:MIKMR,2011,1)



**Sydney,- Monday, 16 May 2011**

*Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA)  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Working Group Meeting*

Discussion focused on:

1. Strategies and approaches that could be implemented in the Canadian context.
  - a. Wrap around service model (Challis, Gunbalanya, Bradshaw)
    - i. School as the hub
    - ii. Holistic view of the child
  - b. Aboriginal teachers employed in the school (Gunbalanya)
    - i. Community involvement
    - ii. Aboriginal people working within the school
    - iii. Use of technology
  - c. Teacher training (Edith Cowan)
    - i. Aboriginal education across the board in pre-service teacher training.
  - d. Early Child Education and Care Integration of Services (Challis)
    - i. Parents as first teachers.
  - e. Pathways to Education
    - i. Aspirational models (Twugia or Follow the Dream)
    - ii. Philanthropic models such as using Sport and Clontarf
2. Strategies from Canada that could be applied into the Australian context.
  - a. Working with Industry
    - i. It is not deliberate or consistent
    - ii. Partnerships with interested parties
    - iii. Mining – meeting the needs of children and preparing them in various pathways.
  - b. Technical and Training initiatives
    - i. Quebec's northern plan
    - ii. Taking training to the community rather than travelling outside a community. Quebec is currently taking in 20,000 migrants a year 18,000 of those are skilled.
    - iii. Technical training is dependent on the needs of the community. Community Colleges also provide technical training.
    - iv. Multi-disciplinary technical and semi-technical skills. The technical and training centres need to very flexible to meet the changing needs of the skills required in the local community and industry area. For example an area in a mining town may need more welders so there needs to be flexibility within the training institutions that they can train more welders.
  - c. Legislation
    - i. Community involvement is entrenched into legislation giving Aboriginal populations the right to consultation in matters that directly affect them and their community.
  - d. Treaties
    - i. We are all treaty people.
    - ii. Teacher training involves Aboriginal education and is included in all treaties.
    - iii. Truth and Reconciliation Committee
  - e. Friendship Centres
  - f. Urban Aboriginal Strategy (INAC)
3. Supporting quality outcomes for rural and remote students and preparing teachers.
  - a. Teacher integration into First Nation community.
    - i. Teachers spend an initial 3 days in a community. The teacher is adopted in the community. This is to encourage retention and integration.
    - ii. Canada is also facing the challenge of an ageing teaching workforce especially of Administrators. They are developing a leadership program and a Masters program. These are to develop upcoming teachers and administrators into future leadership roles.





- iii. Teacher assistant program to certify assistants where credits can be transferred into a teaching program.
- b. Programs with universities to work on language programs
  - i. Learning pathways are not always academic
  - ii. Academic staff comes into the community to teach (up to 3 weeks at a time).
  - iii. Teaching in the mother tongue is encouraged.
- c. In the Inuit territory 38 per cent of Aboriginal teachers are certified.
  - i. They have developed a Master program towards the Inuit cohort.
  - ii. Principles in teaching foundations are language and culture.
  - iii. A foundation year to upgrade skills is also offered.
- d. Distance education
  - i. It is being used more effectively to get students to continue with their education.
  - ii. In the Yukon students after Yr8 must then go to boarding school and this causes a great deal of stress on the student and the family.
- e. English as a Second Language (ESL)
  - i. Bridging the Language Gap (Qld Program) in 75 schools (includes 15 Catholic schools)
    1. The program trains people in from those schools with a coaching model.
    2. Training is for one day per week for 20 weeks
  - ii. Foundations for Schools (Qld Program)
    1. Transitioning into success
    2. Transitioning into school with Indigenous language and also assisting parents.
  - iii. Looking at having national online ESL resources
  - iv. Pre-service desire to have ESL as part of any teaching course.
  - v. In the Nunavut territory ESL training is part of the teacher registration process. Therefore if a teacher has not completed it as part of their pre-service they must have it as part of their professional development to retain their registration.
  - vi. In Canada all regions have approaches to bilingual education. The main focus is in that in the Indigenous territories education services are tailored to the needs of the community.
  - vii. The Yukon has school growth plans which require community engagement the plans are then reviewed by a peer group committee which includes Indigenous community representatives. These plans are not a tick and flick process that are completed and forgotten.
  - viii. It is important that the scope and capacity of children to learn, which requires more work, but ensures that there is a balance of equity. It is more common for many Aboriginal people that language is the responsibility of its people and not government (NSW rep)

### *National Aboriginal Centre of Excellence*

Discussion focused on:

- Tour of the Centre
  - Provides for sporting needs and have a full oval, public gym and pool.
  - Education and arts programs; it has a fully function computer/classroom. They are developing further ways to utilise this room such as a homework room when parents come to the centre.
  - 26 room dormitory used to assist in Aboriginal sporting teams etc to participate in events in Sydney by providing cheap accommodation.
  - Meeting room facilities.
  - Full kitchen and dining room.
  - Hope to be self-sufficient by 2012.



- Centre purchased and funded by the Indigenous Land Corporation. Centre set on old school grounds which have been refurbished and new a facility was also built.
- DEEWR are keen to assist in the expansion of similar centres in NSW and around Australia.

#### *National Congress of Australia's First People*

Discussion focussed on:

- Overview of the Congress
  - Establishment of the Congress
  - Role and functions
  - Membership and delegates
  - Congress model
  - Board
  - Ethics Council
  - What the Congress will not do
  - National elections of the Board
  - Sustainability - \$30 million in Commonwealth funding until 2013, the Congress wish to become self-sufficient and anticipate that this will be a gradual process so that they can become an Independent body.
  - Annual conference to be held 7-9 June 2011.

#### *Redfern Community Centre*

##### *PaCE program – Gamarada Project*

Discussion focussed on:

- Gamarada Project overview
  - Getting fathers involved in their children's schools
  - Will try and start from the 4yr age and preschool
  - Many negative connotations for fathers and schools, seen as the government
  - Need to change the mind-set
  - First discussions to take place around June and they are currently in the planning process
  - Keen to find out about similar programs in Canada
- Gamarada men's program [www.gamarada.org.au](http://www.gamarada.org.au)
  - Providing healing and life skills
  - Benefitting the entire family
  - Assist with education and employment
  - Opportunity for men to engage of all ages to talk about their issues
  - Anger management, emotional control and diet for example are talked through with facilitators.
  - Previous participants assist and become facilitators.
  - Provides for reflection and a positive way forward
  - Program runs for 3hrs over 10 weeks

#### *Reception Canadian Consulate General*

- Greeting by Canadian Consul General, Sydney, Tom McDonald
- Greeting by Janine Pitt, DEEWR NSW State Manager

#### *Farewell Dinner*

- Thank you on behalf the Canadian participants from Mr Leo LaFrance and Ms Kathy Okpik.
- Response from DEEWR by Mr Mark Deweerd.
- Dinner also attended by MCEECDYA representatives.

#### **End of Official Program**



## VISIT OUTCOMES

### *Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Working Group Meeting*

There is a consensus that the governments of Australia and Canada have a strong commitment endeavouring to ensure positive quality life outcomes for Indigenous students. It is also clear that schools and the connections with community can assist in challenging areas such as attendance. Paramount to this is quality training for all those who work within a school with the flexibility to meet the needs of the diverse and changing needs of their community.

#### **Possible suggestions for future collaboration**

- Establishment of a Bilateral Working Group
- Visiting scholars program
- Community exchange program
- Twinning schools program using technology
- Development of school connections
- Aligning community challenges

#### **Information Exchange**

- List of contact details for each group
- Australian representatives will send materials/links to relevant information/programs discussed in the meeting.
- Request for a jurisdiction snapshot of their legislation, policies, challenges, issues and opportunities

#### **Next steps**

- The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and the Indian and Northern Affairs, Canada (INAC) will discuss on a working group model. CMEC represents the Education Ministers of the Canadian provinces and territories and INAC is a federal organisation. What is anticipated is that a Province or territory will take the lead for the group it is likely that whatever grouping is established it will include INAC.
- Once this group is established then work between the MCEECDYA working group and the Canadians will proceed.

#### **Other possibilities for engagement**

- It is anticipated that there will be a summit on Indigenous education, currently scheduled for December 2011, which the MCEECDYA working group and DEEWR may be invited to nominate people to attend.
- There is also a possibility for a return visit by Australian representatives to Canada.

#### **Areas for possible further investigation**

- Friendship centres
- Bi-lingual education
- Teacher pay structures and rewards
- Urban Aboriginal Strategy
- Future visits to include discussion with community groups