



Warilla High School

Reconciliation Action

Plan

2022



Acknowledgement of Country

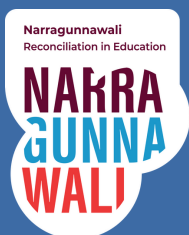
Warilla High School acknowledges the Five Islands
Dreaming people who are the traditional custodians of this
land, the Dharawal Nation.

We pay our respect to the Elders, both past and present
and those of the future, as they continue to protect the
pristine coastline, where we all
enjoy the warmth of the sun, the rolling hills of green grass,
the sand between our toes, the birds' sing songs and the
blue waters.

We hope that the spiritual connection of this land; where we
live, work and teach evokes emotion with all who visit it to
ensure respect for the traditions and stories of
generations to come to encourage lifelong teaching and
learning.



This Reconciliation Action Plan was developed using the Narragunnawali platform and ratified by Reconciliation Australia.



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Message from the Principal

I am proud that Warilla High School adds its name and influence to developing, promoting and celebrating reconciliation in our students and community. I was born in an era where I was counted in the Australian census as fauna; stripped of my race and culture. I have lived through experiences that define why the need is so great for Reconciliation Action Plans in schools, businesses and organisations around our country.

Our school has always been committed to meeting the educational needs of all students, and to addressing the deficit shown in the achievement of First Nations students. However, it is with this step in formalising our resolve, that we show a determination to counteract and correct wherever possible the systematic barriers to First Nations people experiencing success and belonging in our educational community.

Warilla High School is driven by the values of Excellence, Respect, Integrity and Compassion and we have applied this lens to our actions. It is our intention that these actions will provide not only a theoretical framework for change but also a physical manifestation of actions to counteract racism, recognise truth and build long-lasting relationships built on fairness and equality.

It is my genuine hope that the formalisation of our strategies and actions towards a reconciled Australia show our community that we mean business in Closing the Gap. That we mean business in promoting the contributions of First Nations people to our school and community, and that we mean business in ensuring everyone knows that reconciliation is good for us all.

Sincerely yours,

Michelle Brook

Principal



Vision for Reconciliation

At Warilla High School we believe that all people deserve a quality education that promotes equality and social responsibility. It is our hope that our students and teachers see reconciliation as more than a word, but rather as an action that we all have a responsibility to take part in. We acknowledge that since colonisation, successive government policies have systematically disadvantaged, marginalised and discriminated against Australia's First Nations People. This is true with regard to access to quality education, fairness and belonging in schools and Australia's education system.

We stand committed to building a school that holds equality and fairness at its core. To achieve this, we acknowledge the mistakes of the past to build for a better future. In doing our part, we will:

- Promote, teach and celebrate that reconciliation is for everyone and that we all have a part to play.
- Actively recognise the truth of Australia's colonial history by developing curriculum, teaching and learning programs and activities that foster a truthful understanding of this history;
- Challenge racist, discriminatory and/or harmful beliefs, stereotypes, slurs and references that detract from an individual's sense of belonging in our school community. Giving rise to an inclusive environment where all members of our school feel recognised, respected and seen; and
- Build long-lasting, respectful relationships with the Dharawal people by growing our engagement with parents, community and elders to build a shared understanding of the multi-faceted nature of education.

We make this commitment to show our determination to improve the quality of academic and life outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and to close the gap between First Nations and non-First Nations students. We engage in the process of a Reconciliation Action Plan to show our students that doing the good and just thing in life is just as important as other measures of success.

Reconciliation Working Group at WHS

Chairperson: Brandon Harry (Teacher)

Principal: Michelle Brook

Members:

- Shelley Bates (Head Teacher)
- Veronica Luckman (Deputy Principal)
- Peter Hales (Deputy Principal)
- Ashlee Power (Teacher)
- Terese Woollett (Teacher)
- Glen Smart (Teacher)
- Dian Masters-Garcia (Head Teacher)
- Michaela Morton (Teacher)
- Janine Neden (Head Teacher)
- Esen Crngorcevic (Teacher)
- Dana Miller (Teacher)
- James Benning (Teacher)
- Sam Jenkins (Head Teacher)
- Narelle Crawford (School Administrative Officer)
- Katrina Simon (Aboriginal Education Worker)
- Ezekiel Wighton (Aboriginal Education Officer)

Actions Towards Reconciliation

Reconciliation Action Plan actions represent tangible, measurable goals that Warilla High School commit to meeting to better our practices to support broader reconciliation in our school and in our community.

Actions are characterised into three domains:

- **Relationships**
- **Respect**, and;
- **Opportunities**

Within these domains, the aspects of 'In the Classroom', 'Around the School', and 'In the Community' focus our actions.

We commit to implementing and maintaining all of these actions across the three year period from 2022 to 2024.

Relationships

In the Classroom

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in the Classroom.

We are committed to welcoming Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into our classrooms as guests to work alongside our students and children in learning activities. Having an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander presence in learning environments is vital when teaching about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.

How we will deliver this action:

- Ensure opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People to provide First Nations perspectives on lessons that contain culture, history or contexts that concern Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.
- Maintain the presence of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander SLSO.

Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students.

We commit to providing opportunities for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to celebrate their cultural identities. These opportunities positively impact the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and create shared pride for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, contributions, identities and histories in the wider school community.

How we will deliver this action:

- Offer cultural engagement opportunities to First Nations students.
- Continue with the annual Koori Presentation Day
- Continue specifically recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HSC graduates.
- Survey, collate and act on opportunities identified by our students.

Relationships

Around the School

Cultural Competence Training for Staff

We will reflect on our current level of cultural competence and provide staff with a range of opportunities to build and extend their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. We also commit to supporting staff to independently seek out and participate in a variety of cultural awareness experiences that assist them on their own journey of understanding.

How we will deliver this action:

- Deliver school wide cultural competence training, along with respectful and culturally appropriate terminology.

Relationships

With the Community

Welcome to Country

Where appropriate, significant events and meetings at our school commence with a Welcome to Country. Protocols for welcoming visitors to Country have been a part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures for thousands of years. By incorporating these protocols into formal events and important occasions, we recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and Custodians of their Land.

How we will deliver this action:

- Ensure that at all events, assemblies, meetings, conferences or other appropriate occasions hosted by Warilla High School an Acknowledgement of Country will be given to recognise the ongoing custodianship of the country our school stands on.

Celebrate National Reconciliation Week

Our school community celebrates National Reconciliation Week (NRW) which is held from 27 May to 3 June each year by talking about reconciliation in the classroom and around the school, and celebrating with the community. NRW is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures and achievements and to explore how each of us can join the national reconciliation effort.

How we will deliver this action:

- Host a whole school assembly to mark the significance of National Reconciliation Week.
- Work with the Aboriginal Education Committee to develop a range of activities and events across the week.
- Launch Warilla High School's First Nation's uniform.

Build Relationships with Community

We commit to building relationships with our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community that are built on mutual respect, trust and inclusiveness. We value these relationships and their role in helping to create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous staff, students and community members.

How we will deliver this action:

- Build an ongoing relationship with our local AECG
- Reach out to parents and caregivers directly, to provide ongoing invitations to academic, sporting and cultural events that celebrate their student.
- Work with First Nations stakeholders to evaluate what we do well and what areas we can work on.

Respect

In the Classroom

Teach about Reconciliation

Our school community is committed to learning about reconciliation in Australia. Having an understanding of the concept, history and progress of reconciliation is an important part of continuing the reconciliation journey. This understanding also helps to strengthen engagement with our school's RAP by positioning it within the broader story of reconciliation in Australia.

How we will deliver this action:

- Explicitly teach all students about reconciliation.
- Provide information to the community about why WHS has started the RAP process.
- Critically evaluate teaching strategies and text choices against how they support reconciliation.

Explore Current Affairs and Issues

We are committed to raising awareness of current affairs and issues in the public domain that are of particular significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the process of reconciliation. This will be done through curriculum delivery, policies and procedures, and will be integrated into the ethos of our school.

How we will deliver this action:

- Provide opportunities in all subjects for the teaching of current issues that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- As an educational institution, actively and publicly supporting reconciliatory actions and movements.

Respect

Around the School

Acknowledgement of Country

Our school recognises the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the Country on which we live, work, learn and grow.

All staff and students have the opportunity to show respect to Traditional Owners and Custodians by regularly conducting an Acknowledgement of Country at meetings and events throughout the year.

How we will deliver this action:

- Install Acknowledgement of Country signage in our Administration Office, Hall, Principals Office and in the school yard.

Recognise and Respect Rights

We are committed to recognising and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights under the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We acknowledge that working within the frameworks of both declarations is important to reducing discrimination and promoting equality and equity in the educational and wider community.

How we will deliver this action:

- We commit to upholding the UN Declaration of Human Rights and Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- We will work with stakeholders to deliver culturally appropriate learning programs across KLAs.
- Review our behavioural incident and suspension data to assess if the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in this data is representative of school population numbers.
- Work with the Aboriginal Education Committee to develop and implement strategies to address academic, behavioural and socio-economic disadvantages for our students.

Care for Country

We commit to actively connecting with, and caring for, the Country/place on which our school stands. This involves respectfully learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, philosophies and practices about caring for Country/place, as well as physically demonstrating respect for the skies, waterways and Land on which we live and learn. We will consider First Nations perspectives as part of broader sustainability plans, policies and practices. This will reinforce the meaningful and continuous connections Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have continued to have with Country/place since time immemorial, as well as provide positive opportunities for all members of our educational community to become socially and environmentally responsible citizens who display a growing awareness of the importance of First Nations land management and sustainability.

How we will deliver this action:

- Work with the SRC to maintain and improve their environmental initiatives, particularly those, such as container deposit bins, that have significant local effect on the amount of litter in our playground.
- Lobby for funding to provide classrooms with recycling bins, along with a process for emptying these bins.
- Where possible, encourage school expenditure and decision making to be made along sustainable ground.
- Deliver increased plant and tree cover across the school.



Respect

With the Community

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags

Our school flies or displays the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags as a demonstration of our pride and respect for the histories, cultures and contributions of Australia's First Peoples. Flying or displaying the flags promotes a sense of community partnership and a commitment toward reconciliation.

How we will deliver this action:

- Our school already flies the Aboriginal and the Torres Strait Islander flags.
- We will ensure that they are in good condition and treated with the respect they are deserved.

Take Action Against Racism

Racism can have serious negative consequences for the people who experience it, for those who witness it, and for wider society. When racism is properly understood it is easier to overcome. We commit to building awareness of what racism is, the impacts of racism and how to respond effectively when it occurs through an anti-racism strategy tailored to the needs of our school.

How we will deliver this action:

- Explicitly teach what racism is and its impacts on First Nation's peoples.
- Reinforce our Anti-Racism stance by renewing our Anti-Discrimination Campaign, as started by our SRC.
- Evaluate our practices and policies through a critical lense to ensure our processes are free of conscious or unconscious racial bias and, where necessary, make adjustments.
- Support all staff to engage in Cultural Competence training.
- Give staff strategies on how to challenge racist talk they may hear in the classroom.

Opportunities

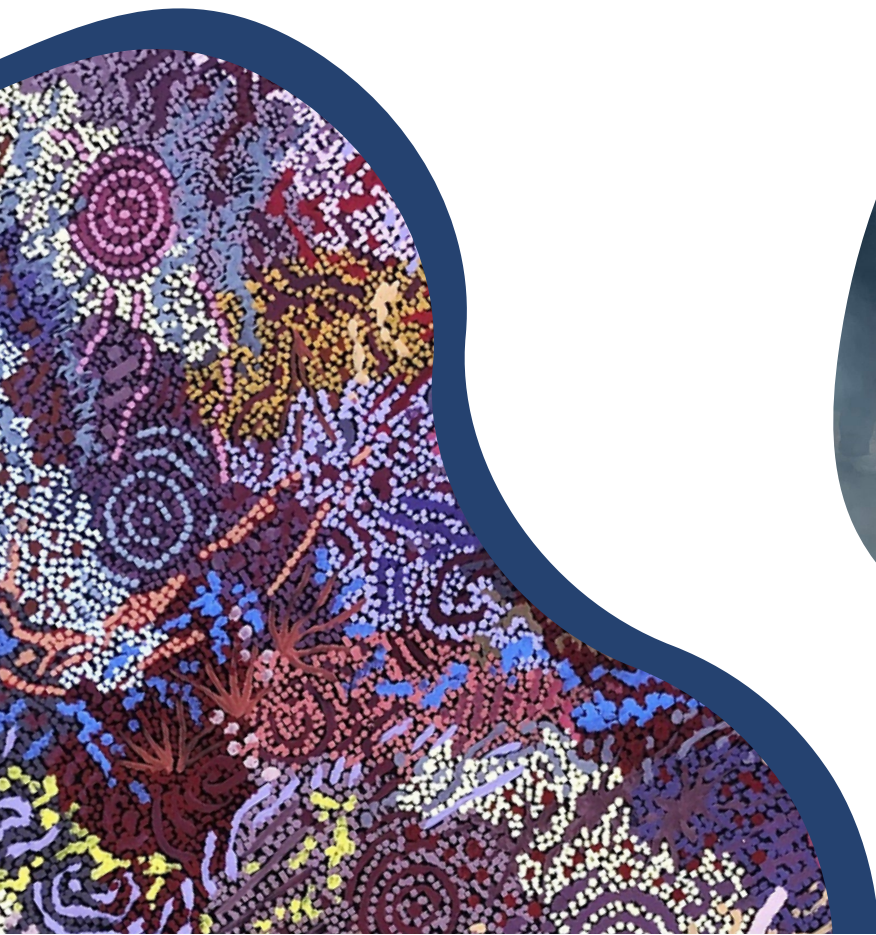
In the Classroom

Curriculum Planning

Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in curriculum planning, development and evaluation processes is a key and ongoing consideration across all year levels and learning areas. Curriculum documents have or will be audited to identify the extent to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions are already embedded, and to identify opportunities for strengthening the representation of this content in the curriculum.

How we will deliver this action:

- As a NSW Department of Education school all KLAs are required to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in their teaching. We will work with the Teaching and Learning Team to work with faculties to audit their approaches to embedding these perspectives and look for opportunities to strengthen meaningful perspectives.



Opportunities

Around the School

Inclusive Policies

All staff in our school are aware of policies that refer specifically to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and increasing knowledge of, and respect for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in Australia. We have a plan in place to ensure all staff comply with these policies in their daily practice. Our internal policies have been, or will be, amended to ensure they are also inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and increase knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in Australia.

How we will deliver this action:

- We will audit our policies to ensure that they are inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and that they are free of conscious or unconscious bias.
- The Learning Support Team will create a Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy to outline our schools consistent approach to supporting academic achievement for our First Nations students.

Staff Engagement with RAP

Commitment to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) from all staff is essential for developing a RAP that is implemented in a meaningful and sustainable way. All staff will be involved in the ongoing development and implementation of our RAP through staff development opportunities facilitated by the RAP Working Group.

How we will deliver this action:

- All staff have had the opportunity to be part of the RAP Working Group.
- Our RAP will be presented to all staff, with the explanation that we have made a commitment to these actions over a three year period.

Opportunities

With the Community

Celebrate RAP Progress

We are committed to reflecting on the progress made in the growth of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions in our school. We will track the progress of our RAP, continually revisit our commitments, and celebrate our achievements, while generating new ideas to develop and sustain our RAP into the future.

How we will deliver this action:

- Invite families and community to our school to celebrate the launch of the RAP and to invite them to be a part of the process.
- We will publish an annual update on our progress with our RAP on our website.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages

We commit to providing students and children with a deeper knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities by learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. We acknowledge the importance of language maintenance and revitalisation efforts and will provide students and children with opportunities to learn – or learn about – the First Language of their local area.

How we will deliver this action:

- Rename our Aboriginal Education Office to Yerrowah, a local Dharawal word for Shellharbour.
- Commission a mural showing the language groups of NSW.
- Work with the Aboriginal Education Committee to increase instances of language learning facilitated by WHS.



