

REFLECT RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

JUL 2019 - JUN 2020



**ACT Council of Parents &
Citizens Associations**

The parent voice on public education

ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations is the representative body for Parent & Citizen Associations in the ACT.
Council represents over 60,000 parents in 89 ACT public schools.



ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Land we live on in the Australian Capital Territory. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the nation.

Respect and understanding of 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 is fundamental to the development of an Australian identity.

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Message from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia is delighted to welcome the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program and to formally endorse its inaugural Reflect RAP.

As a member of the RAP community, the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations joins over 1,000 dedicated corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have formally committed to reconciliation through the RAP program since its inception in 2006. RAP organisations across Australia are turning good intentions into positive actions, helping to build higher trust, lower prejudice, and increase pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Reconciliation is no one single issue or agenda. Based on international research and benchmarking, Reconciliation Australia defines and measures reconciliation through five critical dimensions: race relations; equality and equity, institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance. All sections of the community—governments, civil society, the private sector, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities—have a role to play to progress these dimensions.

The RAP program provides a framework for organisations to advance reconciliation within their spheres of influence. This Reflect RAP provides the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations a roadmap to begin its reconciliation journey. Through implementing a Reflect RAP, the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations will lay the foundations for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

We wish the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations well as it takes these first critical steps in its reconciliation journey. We encourage the organisation to embrace this journey with open hearts and minds, to grow from the challenges, and to build on the successes. As the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation reminded the nation in its final report:

“Reconciliation is hard work—it’s a long, winding and corrugated road, not a broad, paved highway. Determination and effort at all levels of government and in all sections of the community will be essential to make reconciliation a reality.”

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations on its first RAP, and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.



Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Mundine', written over a light pink background.

Message from the President of the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations

I am very proud to present the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations' Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Our Reflect RAP is a clear commitment to recognise and value the work, teachings and spiritual connection with the land of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We are embarking on a journey to become more culturally aware, curious and respectful, and to listen and learn from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities about what is most helpful for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We want our member school communities to journey with us as we seek to raise awareness, gain a greater understanding of our First Peoples and their connection to oldest continuing cultures in human history. We aspire to build strong and lasting relationships, and just, inclusive, equitable and culturally respectful communities.

We value and promote education as being the greatest gift of all. We recognise that early education is a pathway to a reconciled nation and provides the best opportunities for the future of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations is the voice of ACT public school parents. We are committed to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are heard and contribute to decision-making processes, policy development and advocacy efforts.

We want all parents to feel welcome and participate as active members in their school P&C Associations and have opportunities to be engaged in their children's learning. We want all parents to value and encourage respect and understanding of our First Peoples.

I thank all our Council staff and member P&C Associations who have contributed to and supported the development of our Reflect RAP. I would like to acknowledge and thank our RAP working group - Jane Koitka, Vivienne Pearce, Bonnie Roppola and Crystal Cox for their tireless effort to learn, reflect and challenge our thinking, ideas and beliefs. I would also like to acknowledge and thank ACT Education Directorate for their ongoing support and for providing the opportunity for our executive members to participate in cultural awareness training, which placed our feet on the path to our first RAP.

As we embark on this journey, we pledge to listen and learn from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and students to understand how school P&C Associations can adapt and change to support children, young people, families and communities.



Kirsty McGovern-Hooley
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.



Our Business

The ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations (Council) is the peak body for parent representation for ACT public early childhood, primary, high schools and colleges. We represent over 60,000 parents in 89 schools and assist our member associations.

We have been representing parent and community views on public education to Government since 1954. Our services include: -

- Communicating with decision makers and contributing to policy development.
- Consulting with public school parent and community groups to identify issues and ideas for improving public education.
- Resources and training for Parent and Citizen Associations (P&Cs), Preschool Parent Associations (PPAs) and other similar parent bodies in public schools and their volunteers to help these organisations run smoothly.
- We represent the concerns of our member associations and parents to the Minister and Education Directorate, resolve problems with the school/ Directorate, and have input to educational policy and decisions.
- We conduct regular forums to exchange ideas, network with other parents and share expertise or raise concerns with other parent associations.

Council is funded by the ACT Education Directorate together with fees from each of the P&C Associations. We are a not-for-profit organisation with five part time employees and volunteer executive members made up of representatives from school P&C Associations. We do not currently know if any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are either employed by or directly volunteering for our organisation. Our aim is to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to join the P&C Association at the school their children are attending with a view to representation on the Council Executive Committee.

The office for Council is located in Maitland House, Hackett, ACT. The Council executives meet monthly, with a General Meeting for all P&C members held each school term. The General Meetings are sometimes held at a specific school venue providing the opportunity for parents and other attendees to view different school environments.

Our workshops are generally conducted at Maitland House or the Hedley Beare Centre. When required alternative venues may be sought depending on the situation and the circumstances.



Our RAP

This is Council's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This Reflect RAP sets the foundations for building education, inclusion and engagement in ACT Public Schools systems through P&C Associations.

We recognise that awareness, education, and understanding of the cultures of Australia's First Peoples are long overdue. As the peak body and leader of our industry we aim to drive awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures, histories and achievements throughout the ACT Public School system via each P&C Association. We aim to promote and create meaningful relationships, enhance respect and make opportunities for inclusion, engagement and education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families together with all families and citizens within school communities.

As a key educational requirement, we are committed to involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and carers in the decision-making process to progress school improvements and curriculum change that incorporate the history and value Australia's First Peoples bring to the country.

We want our school communities to journey with us as we seek to raise awareness and gain a greater understanding of the oldest continuing culture in human history.

Our Vision for Reconciliation

We value and recognise the work, teachings and spiritual connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with the land.

Our vision is for inclusive, equitable and culturally respectful ACT Public School communities as we contribute to the wellbeing of all members of these communities. We value and promote education as being the greatest gift of all.



Our partnerships / Current Activities

Council's RAP Working Group (RWG) developed this RAP during 2018, using the Reflect RAP guidelines and framework supplied by Reconciliation Australia (RA). This was further enhanced by discussions held with representatives of RA.

Below is a summary of Council's activities in the area of Reconciliation in 2018. We have not yet had direct engagement with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups but conversations with members of the Education Directorate have been useful.

In April 2018, two members of Executive met with the ACT Audit Office to discuss ACT Public Schools' engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and community. These conversations sparked discussion in the May Council Executive meeting, which led to the formation of our RWG.

Three members of the RWG undertook the **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competence Course**, run by Centre for Cultural Competence Australia in the first half of 2018, facilitated by ACT Education Directorate.

Two members of RWG attended the **Rediscovering History Symposium** run by Education Directorate in August 2018. One member attended an Indigenous Language workshop. Members from the ACT Education Directorate's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander section presented basic information at the October 2018 General Meeting of the Council to Executive Members and P&C Association members. An overview of our draft RAP was presented at this October meeting.

The RWG has also consulted with of the ACT Education Unit. A draft RAP was presented for approval and finalisation at the November Executive Meeting.

Further partnerships will be developed as the implementation of the plan progresses across the planned 12-month period.



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN



Relationships

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|--|----------------|--|
| 01 Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, create and maintain a directory of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. | Jun 2020 | RWG group leader |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | Aug 2019 | RWG group leader |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a relationship with the United Ngunnawal Elders Council. | | |
| 02 Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish an article in Council's ParentACTion magazine, Council's website and all Council's social media channels around NRW. Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. Develop and supply activity ideas for P&C Associations to celebrate NRW. Circulate a list of Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to P&C Associations. | Feb-Mar 2020 | RWG group leader and researcher to complete all requirements before handing to Communication Officer |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council to display NRW posters in their offices, meeting and workshop rooms over this period. | | Council Administrator |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group members to participate in an external and school NRW event. | May – Jun 2020 | RWG group leader |

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| <p>03 Raise awareness of Reconciliation and what it means amongst all P&C Associations, parents and carers.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, conduct and report on a short online survey prior to this RAP. | Aug 2019 | RWG Researcher and Council Communication Officer |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct the same survey at the end of this RAP. | Jun 2020 | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff. | Aug 2019 | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey. | Sep 2019 | RWG group leader |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey. | | |
| <p>04 Initiate ideas for P&Cs to build special spaces through school community participation.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ideas and where possible resources for P&C Associations to build school spaces to engage school communities in building, making or contributing to these spaces. These spaces when completed can be used for various future events. • Conduct a 'Think Tank' session as part of one of Council's General Meetings or a special session to generate ideas the P&Cs can own, instigate and implement. | Nov 2019 | Executive Members headed by Council President and RWG |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council to promote these ideas on their website, ParentACTion magazine and all Council's social media channels. | Feb 2020 | RWG Leader and Council Communication Officer |
| <p>Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination. | Sep 2019 | Council Policy Officer |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. | | Council Executive Officer |

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN



Respect

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|--|----------|--|
| 01 Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within Council. (staff and executives) | Aug 2019 | RWG Researcher |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation. | Jan 2020 | |
| 02 Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples observing cultural protocols. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the land and waters within our organisation's operational areas Increase Council staff and members' understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. Include an Acknowledgment of Country as part of Council's branding, including letterheads and all other aspects of correspondence, in every ParentACTion magazine, as a permanent statement on our website, Facebook and all other social media channels used. | Aug 2019 | RWG group leader, RWG Researcher, Council President, Executive Officer and Administrator |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness with all P&C Association members of these cultural protocols via all Council communication channels. | May 2020 | Communication Officer |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to announce Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of all meetings, workshops, and events. The RAP working group will provide several example acknowledgements along with the guidelines for personalisation. Ensure Council circulates examples and guidelines to all P&C Associations. | Sep 2019 | Council President, Executive Officer researcher and Council Communication Officer |

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| <p>03 Promote Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education to staff, P&C members and external stakeholders.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education program to all P&C members in our network, and encourage schools to develop their own RAPs via the Narragunnawali platform. Encourage all staff and P&C members to engage with the professional learning (including webinar) resources available via Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education online platform. Encourage all staff and P&C members in our network to sign up to the Narragunnawali News mailing list. Host an appropriate link to Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education platform on our website. | Sep 2019 | Council Communication Officer |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali team to identify opportunities for strengthening the connections between Narragunnawali and P&C networks. | Apr 2020 | RWG Leader and Researcher |
| <p>04 Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff, Executive members and P&C Association members about the meaning of NAIDOC week. | May 2020 | RWG secretary and Communication Officer |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce staff, executive members and all members of the P&C Associations to NAIDOC Week by promoting through our magazine, website and all social media channels. Promote school and external events in the ACT through our website and Facebook page. | May 2020 | RWG member Secretary Communication Officer |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop appropriate ideas for P&Cs to conduct events at their school. | Jun 2020 | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise P&C Associations of posters and marketing collateral available through Reconciliation Australia. | Apr & May 2020 | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the Council puts up posters in their offices, meeting and workshop rooms during this period of celebration. | Jul 2020 | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP Working group to participate in a school and/or external NAIDOC Week event. | First week of Jul 2020 | RWG group leader |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include all the above points in our RAP communication plan. | Jul 2019 | RWG Researcher |
| 05 Acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council to display small table size flags at all general meetings, workshops, forums etc. | Aug 2019 | Council Administrator |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote awareness and importance of flag raising. • Encourage all P&C Associations to lobby with their school's Principal to fly all three flags if they are not already doing so. Also, awareness of flags in print and social media. | May 2020 | Council President and Executive Officer |



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN



Opportunities

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|---|----------|--|
| 01 Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. | Nov 2019 | RWG Researcher |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. | | |
| 02 Encourage more members of diverse backgrounds in each individual P&C school group. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a volunteer recruitment kit in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for each P&C Association to extend to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and carers with children enrolled in ACT Public Schools. | Nov 2019 | RWG Researcher |
| 03 Encourage more membership to help move the P&C forward and grow our volunteer base. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask teachers and staff to encourage parents and carers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait students to join their P&C Association. Promote courses these parents could attend to better understand the role P&C Associations play in the wider community and how they could make a difference towards making schools great for every student. | Feb 2020 | Council President and RWG leader Council Executive Officer |
| 04 Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of the types of products and services that can be procured from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. Notify P&C Associations of the types of products available. Investigate Supply Nation membership. Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. | Nov 2019 | RWG Researcher |

05 Launch RAP and Celebrate RAP progress.

- Organise a RAP launch celebration and invite appropriate groups.
- Announce RAP launch on social media and in ParentACTion Magazine.

Sep 2019

- Produce media releases. Promote on website and Facebook and in ParentACTion magazine.

Aug 2019
Nov 2019

- Generate celebration activities for Council and P&C Associations at Council General Meetings.

Aug 2019
Sep 2019
Mar 2020
Jun 2020

RWG Group Leader,
Council Communication
Officer,
RWG Researcher,
RWG Group Leader



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN



Governance

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|--|---------------------------|---|
| 01 Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update the RWG to ensure it governs RAP implementation. | Aug 2019 Feb 2020 | President and RWG group leader |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure RWG draft a Terms of Reference for the Council. | Jul 2019 | RWG group leader |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. | Mar 2020 | President, Executive Officer, RWG and Executive Members |
| 02 Provide appropriate funding to implement this RAP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs including a budget for RAP implementation. | Aug 2019 | RWG researcher and Council Executive Officer |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments. | | RWG Leader |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. | Aug 2019 | RWG researcher and Council President |
| 03 Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learning's both internally and externally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. | 30 th Sep 2020 | RWG group leader and researcher |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys the RAP both at the start and finish of this RAP. | Aug 2019 Jun 2020 | RWG researcher and Council Communication Officer |

04 Develop communication plan

Include such things as;

- A 5 minute RAP report on the agenda for every General meeting.
- Communications for celebrations of special days.
- Poster availability.
- Generating event ideas.
- Articles for ParentACTion magazine and social media channels.

Aug 2019

RWG Researcher
and Council
Communication Officer

05 Continue our reconciliation journey by Developing our next RAP

- Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.

Jun 2020

RWG group Researcher



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