



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

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ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER VIEWS

EDUCATION FOR QUEENSLAND ABORIGINES AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS *

(One of the recommendations of the Schools Commission Aboriginal Consultative Group was that each department set up a Consultative Committee. Various of the State Departments have moved in this direction. Queensland was the first state to establish such a committee, and that committee has now presented personally to the Director General of Education in Queensland, its first report. We reproduce the Summary of Advice given by the Consultative Committee to the Director General, together with a list of members of the committee and its terms of reference. We know this will be of great interest to similar groups in other states and also to teachers and others concerned with the education of Aboriginal children. Ed.)

Membership of The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee to the Queensland Department of Education:

Chairman: Mr J. Hamilton, Aboriginal School Visitor, Queensland Department of Education, P.O.Box 33, North Quay, 4000

Other Members:

Mrs S. Woosup, Teacher Aide,
Bamaga State Primary School.

Ms R. Kawangka, Teacher Aide,
Aurukun State Primary School.

Mrs E. Charlie, Councillor,
Edward River Community Council.

Ms N. Lui, Pre-School Advisor,
Department of Aboriginal and
Islander Advancement.

Mrs E. Greenwood, Teacher Aide,
Cairns State High School.

Mr. L. Rosendale, Field Officer,
Aboriginal Adult Education,
Cairns.

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*From the Report to the Director General of Education, Queensland Department of Education, by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee, January 1978. Copies of the full report are obtainable from Mr J. Hamilton, Chairman (see address above).

Mr E. Law, Student,
Diploma of Teaching Course,
Townsville College of
Advanced Education.

Mr T. Loban,
Thursday Island.

Mr R. Robinson, Manager,
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Legal Aid Service Ltd,
Charleville.

Mr L. Malone, Teacher Aide,
St Michael's Primary School,
Palm Island.

Executive Officer:

Mr. J. Budby, Advisory Teacher,
(Education of Indigenous Children),
Queensland Department of Education.

Department of Education Advisors:

Mr F. Young, Inspector of Secondary Schools,
(Education of Indigenous Children),
Queensland Department of Education.

Mr D. Eastment, Inspector of Primary Schools,*
Queensland Department of Education.

Mr L.J. Dwyer, Inspector of Primary Schools,
(Education of Indigenous Children),
Queensland Department of Education.

INTRODUCTION

I.I. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Queensland Department of Education has accepted that planning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education must be :-

- a) part of its departmental structure, consisting of persons with special expertise in the field;
- b) responsive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewpoints of needs.

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*Mr Eastment acted as Inspector of Schools (Indigenous Education) during Mr Dwyer's absence in England.

The Queensland Department of Education has set up a departmental structure by creating the positions of Inspector of Schools (Primary and Secondary) responsible for the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. A team of advisory teachers assists the inspectors of schools.

To ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander views are given consideration in the planning, development, and assessment of programs and proposals, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee to the Queensland Department of Education was established. This Committee provides a link between the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the Department of Education.

A secondary trained Aboriginal advisory teacher was appointed by the Department of Education as Executive Officer of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee to provide input from this Committee to the Department of Education.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee are that they provide the Director-General of Education and the Department of Education with a reliable expression of informed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander views on:

- a) the educational needs of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders;
- b) appropriate methods of meeting these needs;
- c) the suitability of particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education proposals, as required;
- d) the effectiveness of particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education projects and proposals, as required.

SUMMARY OF ADVICE GIVEN

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

ADVICE 1

Membership of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee be increased by two (2) members to fourteen (14); these extra representatives to be selected to service each of the North-West and Central Queensland areas.

ADVICE 2

The Department of Education fund a training programme for members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee

ADVICE 3

The Department consider the payment of a sitting fee to members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee for services rendered.

TEACHER AIDES - COUNSELLORS

ADVICE 4

The term Teacher Assistant be used for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders employed as teacher aides in our schools.

ADVICE 5

The Department of Education in consultation with us, revise and up-date the role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teacher Aides in schools.

ADVICE 6

The Inspectors of Schools (Primary and Secondary) - Education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders encourage principals and teachers to involve their aides in the ways described in the revised guidelines.

ADVICE 7

The Department of Education, in consultation with the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee, investigate the possibility of permanent status and a career structure for state and non-state teacher aides who have had at least two (2) years of satisfactory employment as teacher aides.

ADVICE 8

The Department of Education develop and implement suitable training programs for teacher aides. This to be done in consultation with the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee.

ADVICE 9

That a career structure and permanent status be introduced for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support people working in urban areas and that movement up this career ladder be dependent on training and experience.

ABORIGINAL SCHOOL VISITORS

ADVICE 10

Consideration be given to the employment of Torres Strait Islanders to work in a similar capacity to the Aboriginal School Visitors so that an understanding and appreciation of their culture can be imparted.

ADVICE 11

Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders be employed in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton and Mt Isa to work as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander School Visitors.

ADVICE 12

That at a later date other provincial and country cities and towns be serviced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEES

ADVICE 13

The Department of Education encourage, where required, the setting up of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Education Advisory Committees to the schools in Aboriginal Communities and in the Torres Strait Islands, in addition to P & C Committees presently operating in many of these schools.

ADVICE 14

The Community Education Advisory Committees should contain more than 50% of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

ADVICE 15

Membership of Community Education Advisory Committees could include the following:

- . Parents
- . Teacher aides
- . Community Councillors
- . the Principal
- . Teachers
- . Representative of Community Administration
(as ex-officio member)

ABORIGINES AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS IN SENIOR EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

ADVICE 16

The Department of Education proceed with developing plans for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders to gain Senior Executive positions with the Department of Education.

TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

ADVICE 17

Aboriginal and Islander Adult Education Units, such as that set up in Cairns be developed for other suitable centres in Queensland as required.

ADVICE 18

The training of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adult Education Field Officers in the Aboriginal and Islander Adult Education Programme of Technical and Further Education in the Cairns region be a feature of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adult Education Units in other centres as suggested in *ADVICE 17*.

ADVICE 19

The Department of Education, in consultation with the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee, consider the publication of pamphlets and the production of suitable films so that Adult Education programmes can be better advertised and can assist in the education of Adult Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

TOWNSVILLE COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION - DIPLOMA IN TEACHING COURSE FOR ABORIGINES AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS

ADVICE 20

We support the Department of Education in its acceptance and encouragement of the Diploma of Teaching Course for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders at the Townsville College of Advanced Education.

ADVICE 21

The Department give some written assurance that any Aborigine or Torres Strait Islander who successfully completes the Diploma of Teaching Course at the Townsville College of Advanced Education will be employed as a teacher by the Department of Education.

TORRES STRAIT ISLAND TEACHERS

ADVICE 22

The Department of Education further investigate ways and means for Torres Strait Island teachers to become members of the Queensland Department of Education.

SCHOOL AND CURRICULUM

ADVICE 23

Recognition of Aboriginal and Islander culture should be a feature of educational programming throughout Queensland.

LOW SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT

ADVICE 24

The Department of Education, in consultation with this Committee, consider the funding of a research project to investigate the programmes already in Queensland schools to determine why Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders are achieving low academically and to propose positive ways of overcoming the problems.

DEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

ADVICE 25

The support system set up by the Queensland Department of Education be continued and extended, where required.

ADVICE 26

The Department of Education provide information for this Committee, in order to clarify roles about the advisory teaching service and any other support people in the field of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education.

ADVICE 27

The Department of Education accept as policy the gradual replacement of the present advisory staff, and other support persons, by suitably trained Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

SEMINARS

ADVICE 28

The Department of Education investigate the feasibility of school-based and regional based seminars.

ADVICE 29

Whenever seminars dealing with the education of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders are organised, local Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders should provide at least 50% of the representatives.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES

ADVICE 30

An urgent review of all books and kits needs to be undertaken to gauge suitability of materials and relevance of information contained in them.

ADVICE 31

The Department of Education second one (or more) teacher(s) to conduct a review of books and kits on behalf of this Committee.

ADVICE 32

The Department of Education consider the employment of a person or persons, preferably Aborigine and/or Torres Strait Islander as a curriculum development writer in the field of education about Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

ADVICE 33

In the event that no Aborigine or Torres Strait Islander can be employed at present, then one be trained by the Department of Education to take on this role.

ADVICE 34

The Department of Education consider the funding of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee so that it can employ a person or persons, to work closely with the Committee, to compile an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies kit.

ADVICE 35

Once this kit has been compiled it should be made available to all Queensland schools.

ADVICE 36

The Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee be responsible for receiving and approving all new programmes, concerning education for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, to be implemented in Queensland State Schools.

ADVICE 37

That research be implemented to gauge the reasons why teachers are reluctant to stay in Community and remote area schools which have a predominance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

ADVICE 38

As an outcome of this research the Queensland Department of Education undertake action to overcome this problem.

ADVICE 39

The Department of Education create promotional positions for people who wish to remain in the field of education for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

ADVICE 40

The Department of Education, in consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee, set up an interview panel for all new teachers and principals who have applied to teach in (or who are posted to) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community schools.

ADVICE 41

The Department of Education move towards making compulsory, for all teachers undergoing training, units in:-

- a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies;
- and
- b) Language development training.

ADVICE 42

The Department of Education provide funds for committed teachers of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders to study suitable courses.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

ADVICE 43

The Department of Education support bilingual education programmes when requested by a Community.

OUT-STATION EDUCATION

ADVICE 44

The Department of Education, on behalf of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee, co-opt a person or persons to investigate fully out-station education and to provide such information to this Committee.

COMMUNICATION

ADVICE 45

The Department of Education support the aim of this Committee in providing through a suitable single publication, an outline of the function of various bodies servicing Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in the field of education.

SCHOOL EXCURSIONS

ADVICE 46

The Department of Education ensure that organisers of excursions fully brief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and involve them in the organisation of excursions and ensure the participation of parents in all excursions.

ADVICE 47

The Department of Education, in consultation with this Committee, develop plans for excursions so that a more positive educational benefit for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is ensured.

ADVICE 48

Provision for the teaching of survival skills in the city should be a feature of excursions.

ADVICE 49

The Department of Education make funds available for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders to set up and manage camp sites where European, Aboriginal, and Torres Strait Islander children can visit and be taught something of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of life.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

ADVICE 50

The Queensland Education Department approach organisations involved in activities related to the employment of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, to establish contact between these organisations and the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee.

EXTRA ASSISTANCE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

ADVICE 51

The Department of Education investigate the feasibility of offering tutorial assistance to those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children of primary school age who need such such help.

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