



# The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

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**REPORT:**

Brumby, E. & Green, N. (Eds): *Preparing Teachers for Aboriginal Education*. Report on the National Conference, August 28-31, 1977.

*This Second National Conference of Teachers of Aboriginal Children was held at Mt Lawley College of Advanced Education. The Report has now been printed by The Aboriginal Teacher Education Program, Mt Lawley College of Advanced Education. Copies can be purchased by writing to Mr N. Green at the College, 2 Bradford Street, Mt Lawley, W.A. 6050.*

*The Report includes papers on the following topics: the expectations of Aboriginal communities; the expectations of employers; the expectations of school principals; teacher preparation for Aboriginal education; the views of Aboriginal student teachers; Aboriginal Community Colleges; Aboriginal teacher aide training; curriculum change; policies in Aboriginal education: failures, expenditure; Aboriginal Community Schools; the recommendations of the Conference, and concluding comments from Mr S. Albert, Chairman, National Aboriginal Education Committee, Mr P. Hughes, Member, National Aboriginal Education Committee, and Mr N. Green, Conference organizer.*

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations, apart from those marked (\*), were passed at plenary sessions of the Conference. Because of lack of time, those recommendations marked (\*) were referred to the Planning Committee and subsequently passed.

**PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION**

1. *To: All Colleges of Advanced Education and Universities*

We recommend that recommendation 5.7 of the National Conference on Aboriginal Education 1976 be adopted, strongly endorsed and implemented immediately, inter alia -

That training institutions incorporate Aboriginal Studies in all teacher education programmes as a fully integrated core element. That a working committee be established to examine the strategies involved.

We also recommend that lecturers and other staff involved in and associated with courses of Aboriginal and Intercultural Education actively seek to promote a positive and informed direction in all related courses of study, to the extent that community education in relation to Aboriginals is encouraged, diversified and made available more widely. And that such educational staff are made aware of the grave problems inherent in ethno-centric attitudes.

2. *To: All Education Departments and all teacher education institutions*

For students who propose teaching largely in Aboriginal areas, practical teaching periods, where at all possible be extended and should take place largely in schools where there are significant numbers of Aboriginal students.

3. *To: All Colleges of Advanced Education and Universities*

We recommend that Colleges of Advanced Education and Universities ensure that units and courses recognize the multi-cultural aspects of society, with respect to -

- a) course content and structure
- b) student selection policies.

Such changes will require co-operation between all departments within the institution.

4. *To: All Colleges of Advanced Education and Universities*

Given the multi-cultural nature of Australian society we recommend that Teaching English as a Second Language should be a core unit for pre-service teacher education, with due emphasis on the influence of cultural background on language usage.

\*5. *To: All Colleges of Advanced Education*

That Colleges of Advanced Education admitting significant numbers of Aboriginal students to their courses should:

- a) offer units that are Aboriginal in purpose, style and content,
- b) invite Aboriginal representatives to advise and participate in the construction of these units.

\*6. *To: All Colleges of Advanced Education and Universities*

That the curriculum studies courses at teacher training institutions prepare teachers to accept community involvement in developing school based programs and in formulating school policies.

#### IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

7. *To: All Public Service Boards and Statutory Authorities*

We recommend that all government departments and authorities exercising service functions should incorporate as an integral part of induction and in-service training, courses specifically designed to educate staff in more positive and emphatic approaches to dealing with Aboriginal and other cultural groups.

#### ABORIGINAL TEACHERS

8. *To: National Aboriginal Education Committee*

This conference, bearing in mind the great diversity of Aboriginal situations in Australia invites the National Aboriginal Education Committee to initiate as a research project an investigation into the variety of ways in which Aboriginal schools and schools with a significant Aboriginal population, can move towards Aboriginalization, i.e. towards a greater degree of involvement by Aboriginals in the teaching process.

9. *To: All Teacher Organizations, Education Departments, Colleges of Advanced Education, Public Service Boards and the Schools Commission*

As an alternative to 3 year continuous campus teacher training Aboriginal Teaching Assistants/Aides may gain a Diploma of Teaching by stages, through a flexible combination of:

- 1) Performance of their present teaching duties
- 2) The unique Aboriginal contribution (language, personal skills, culture, teaching method) they make to their community education programmes.
- 3) Block release periods for teacher training at institutions or in the field.
- 4) External study units.

- \*10. *To: All Teacher Organizations, Education Departments, Colleges of Advanced Education, Public Service Boards and the Schools Commission*

That, as a corollary of recommendation (9) a progressive salary scale be tied to the training stages reached by Aboriginal Teaching Assistants and the extent of their experience as para-professionals in schools.

#### ABORIGINAL SCHOOLS

11. *To: National Aboriginal Education Committee, Department of Aboriginal Affairs and all Education Departments*

This conference, recognizing the movement of Aboriginal people towards self management of their own communities and affairs, supports the parallel movements towards Aboriginalization of predominantly Aboriginal schools and towards a greater degree of control over those schools by their own communities.

12. *To: National Aboriginal Education Committee*

This conference invites the National Aboriginal Education Committee to investigate and report on the feasibility of government funded autonomous community schools as models for Aboriginal schools.

\*13. *To: All Education Departments and the Schools Commission*

Community based education should be available for  
Aboriginals.

\*14. *To: All Education Departments and the Schools Commission*

It is recommended that teachers and administrators determine the means within their own situations to communicate more effectively with Aboriginal families and community leaders so that a positive education policy may be produced through this interaction.

\*15. *To: All Education Departments and the Department of  
Aboriginal Affairs*

Money allocated to schools for special programs involving Aborigines should be investigated critically and monitored to ensure that Aboriginal people receive the benefits.

#### ADULT EDUCATION

16. *To: Committees on Research and Development in Education  
and Research Schools in Universities and elsewhere*

That this conference recognizes the desire of Aboriginal communities for the mounting of a literacy programme for adult Aborigines at the immediate community level be given the highest priority, and that:

- a) the curriculum should wherever possible be generated from the client group's own linguistic world and experience.

- b) the possibility of using existing primary and secondary teachers for this task be investigated.
- c) the implications for teacher pre-service and in-service training be given urgent consideration.

\*17 *To: The Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Commonwealth Department of Education*

The Tutor system already in operation as a secondary Grant Scheme should be extended to include all levels of primary school.

#### TEACHING METHODS AND THE CURRICULUM

18. *To: National Aboriginal Education Committee, all Education Departments and Teacher Education Authorities*

That the viability of traditional Aboriginal learning techniques be recognized and that these be fully researched with a view to incorporating them into teaching strategies for Aboriginal children, to make the style of education input from both home and school more homogeneous.

19. *To: Australian Council and Curriculum Development Centre*

We recommend that Aboriginal groups which are interested in producing material designed to enhance community knowledge of Aboriginal culture, life-style and contemporary thought, should be allocated funds to enable this production to proceed.

Material suitable for funding should include audio, audio-visual, film, written and other media methods.

#### PUBLIC AWARENESS

\*20. *To: Federal Government and all State Governments, Commissioner for Community Relations, all Education Authorities*

That the State and Commonwealth Governments be asked to increase their support for a programming that would encourage employing bodies, trade unions and the media to develop positive attitudes and empathy towards ethnic groups whose personalities, social structures and cultures are different from those of the Australian mainstream population.

This program should be implemented only after full consultation with representatives of ethnic groups and with their active participation.

#### FUTURE CONFERENCE PLANNING

\*21. *To: Northern Territory Division of the Australian Department of Education, Northern Territory Teachers Association, National Aboriginal Education Committee*

We recommend that the 1978 conference be held in the Northern Territory, and that

a) notification of the conference be given to all States and schools by April 30th, 1978 (or four months before the conference.)

b) the majority of the delegates should be classroom teachers and teaching assistants, where the conference emphasis is on classroom procedures.

c) Aboriginal representation be as high as possible.

d) the 1978 conference to be workshop oriented with a few keynote speakers.

e) the National Aboriginal Education Committee be invited to convene future national conferences on Aboriginal education.

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