



Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated

www.vaeai.org.au

Koorie Education Network - Pathways and Transitions Forum 26/7/18



Attendees

Pam Anderson, SkillsPlus
Neville Atkinson, VAEAI
Margaret Atkinson, VAEAI
Sally Bailey, SkillsPlus
Anjee-lee Bamblett, VAEAI
Kirsty Bell, Chisholm Institute
Josephine Boffa, Jesuit Social Services
Jeremy Brewer, DET
Anne Burgoyne, DET
Tammy Campbell, DET
Julia Chiang, DET
Angela Chittern, LAECG Member
April Clarke, VAEAI
Sharna Colgan, DET
Anna Commadeur, VAEAI
Jeremy Cussen, DET
Gordon D’Rosario, Holmesglen TAFE
Melinda Easson, VACSAL
Locky Eccles, South-West TAFE
Josh Edwards, VAEAI
Clinton Edwards, VAEAI
Lee-Ann Emzin, Swinburn
Michelle Evans, DHHS
Andrea Evans-McCall, SkillsPlus
Michele Fry, GELLEN
Richard Fry, DET
Bernadette Gigliotti, CEAV
Sandra Gould, BRACE Institute
Misti Gow, DET
Gary Hamence, DET

Judith Hood, LAECG Member
Meagan Howell, DET
Lea Jones, Swinburne Uni
Janette Kennedy, DET
Debra Kiley, DET
Peter Lovett, VAEAI
Amelia McCulloch, CEAV
Jessica Mobourne, DET
Mark Morgan, DET
Annabel Mounsey, Centre for Adult Ed
Phillip Murray, VAEAI
Jennifer Murray-Jones, DET
Beth Parker, DET
Katrina Penfold, DET
Rowena Price, Victoria University
Jo-ann Proctor, DET
Sam Rioli, RMIT
Deidre Rose, LAECG member
Tina Sahin, VAEAI
Nicole Shanahan, RMIT
Renee Sleigh, Latrobe Uni
Claire Smith, DET
Charles Solomon, VAEAI
Bronte Spirit, DPC
Tyson Austin, DET
Steve Van Nus, DET
Joanne Wilson, Federation Training
Meg Yates, Box Hill TAFE

Apologies

Geraldine Atkinson, President VAEAI
Liz Allen, DPC
Nellie Green, Latrobe University
Kirsty Lilyst, Toorong Marnong



Opening Remarks – Lionel Bamblett, GM VAEI

Lionel acknowledged Traditional Owners and welcomed everyone to the Forum which follows on from two successful forums in 2017.

VAEAI is about education and training for all Koorie people – both formal as well as community education.

In recent times we have smashed the target under Close the Gap for participation in Year 4 Kindergarten. In 2017 94% of Victorian Aboriginal children enrolled in Year 4 kinder; showing a higher participation rate than non-Aboriginal children. We're also seeing continued good results in Year 12 participation and outcomes. It would be great if we could see those numbers double and even triple. Marrung scholarships have helped, with over 160 students receiving scholarships since 2009.

We are seeing a positive trajectory for Aboriginal Education in this State. Education and training is not just a pathway to employment but also a means of empowering communities.

We want to see education outcomes but also want Koorie students to feel comfortable in their own skin; in their own identity. This needs to be kept in mind in all the work we do in education and training. And we need to think

about how we can connect better across the sector.

In the VET and University sectors we continue to see good participation rates at higher level courses and great outcomes including accessing employment, setting up businesses and community leadership.

Toorong Marnong is the Accord VAEAI has with the 9 universities in Victoria. It is a partnership with the Universities' Vice-Chancellors Committee and is providing a forum where pathways, engagement and support can be discussed and strategies implemented to improve the experiences of Koorie learners.

These forums are important to the implementation and evolvement of Marrung and how Wurreker can be strengthened as it continues to play an important part in enabling Marrung to be successful. They bring an opportunity for training providers (from Learn Local, to TAFE, to private Registered Training organisations), the Koorie education and training workforce, employers, and employment networks to share their knowledge and experience of what works for Koorie learners and foster greater collaboration to improve pathways and transitions.



VAEAI / Wurreker Update – Neville Atkinson, Wurreker Manager

Neville provided information to the forum in relation to:

- **Marrung Governance**
 - Koorie Education Roundtables – over 20 were held in 2017; 32 will be held in 2018
 - Marrung VET Forums which focus specifically on post-compulsory education training and employment issues are also held across the State – 16 each year – 2 in each VAEAI region
 - There are 4 Regional Partnership Forums per year (based on DET Regions) - each Region has to develop its own Marrung Implementation Plan
 - Central Governance Committee is held twice per year and the first Ministerial Roundtable will happen on 24th September 2018
- VAEAI Wurreker Awards will be held on September 13th 2018. Nominations close on 17th August.
- **Wurreker Activities**
 - Koorie Education Network Pathways and Transitions Forum was held on 30th November 2017, including a focus on support networks in the sector and best practice.
 - Wurreker Statewide Conference was held on 9th February 2018
 - VAEAI Representative Council In-Service focusing on Murrung Governance and the Cultural Understanding and Safety Training was held in March
 - Aboriginal Languages Training Program – Tina Sahin has been appointed to VAEAI – she will work with VACL to promote and get this training implemented later in 2018
 - Marrung Action 8a. VET Workforce Re-Design Project



- Toorong Marnong – Tertiary Information Sessions have been held across the State
- **School Education Sector**
 - VAEAI 2017 Koorie Year 12 Yearbook is in process of being published, and information about the 2018 Yearbook has been circulated
 - Review of Koorie Academy of Excellence is due for completion in August
 - CUST – in process of rolling out across State schools
- **Early Years Sector**
 - Koorie Inclusion Support Program – professional development, resources and support to Early Childhood and Child Care Services are more welcoming and inclusive of Koorie families and their children

It was noted that in the Workforce Re-Design project KLO the focus is on how the workforce can better support and serve Koorie learners who are enrolled in private training providers and Learn Locals. The KLO positions in TAFEs and dual sector providers will stay. There are currently 23 KLO positions, some of which are part-time.

Indigenous Participation in Pre-Accredited Training
Eduard DeHue, Director Participation, Inclusion and Regional Engagement, Higher Education and Skills Group, DET



Skills First Program

- Changes to Reconnect to engage clients into services
- Encourage providers to seek out the most marginalized participant
- Focus is on building skills not employment targets

Skills Reconnect Grant Program

Eduard provided an overview of the Skills First ReConnect Grant Program. The program has evolved since 2016 and now focuses on working with:

- High needs learners aged 17-19 who have not completed Year 12 to help them access the wrap around services they need to re-engage and succeed in vocational education and training;
- Long-term unemployed individuals aged 20-26 who have not completed Year 12

27 RTOs have been provided with funding.

Partnerships between TAFEs and Learn Local organisations and other community service providers are essential. Place-based approaches

such as Reconnect provide flexibility to meet local needs.

The next program funding will be available from 1/7/18 to 2020. Successful RTOs in the initial round are likely to be re-funded and it is expected there will be limited opportunities for new organisations to get funding.

In 2017, 9% of Reconnect program participants were Aboriginal up from 6% in 2016. Overall numbers in the program were 410 in 2016 and 575 in 2017.

Indigenous Learn Locals and other Learn Locals focusing on delivering to Indigenous learners include:

South-Eastern Region

- Bnym Aboriginal Corporation in Gippsland
- Ngwala Willumbong Co-op Ltd

North-Western Region

- Miirimbeena Aboriginal Education group in Echuca
- Echuca Neighbourhood House
- East End Community House in Mildura
- Castlemaine Community House

North-Eastern Region

- Rumblara Aboriginal Co-operative
- Yorta Yorta Aboriginal Corporation
- Basin Community House

We know that 60% of people who are supported through pre-accredited courses such as those offered through Reconnect are likely to go through and complete an accredited course.

Capacity and Innovation Fund (CAIF)

ACFE Board fund the CAIF program. Over 8 years \$27m has been invested. CAIF provides \$50,000 grants to Learn Local organisations (up to \$150,000 for consortiums) to support innovative practice and capacity building in the

Learn Local sector, and streamline the cost of regulation to the sector.

Information provided at the forum by Eduard is available on VAEAI's website www.vaeai.org.au .



Career Planning – supporting Koorie student transitions and pathways - Bernadette Gigliotti, CEO, Australian Centre for Career Education (Career Education Association of Victoria (CAEV) - <http://www.ceav.vic.edu.au>

Located in Greensborough – co-located with Melbourne Polytechnic.

Offers:

- Consultancy services in career development and career education programs.
- Professional career counselling services, an all ages service provided through CEAV Career Counselling Australia at no cos
- Outreach services to support career development and education programs in schools, community, industry and government agencies and organisations.

Interested in how to develop a structured career education process for Indigenous people: a Career Program for Koorie Learners needs to be bound in culture.

Career development is the process of managing life, learning and work over the lifespan. It applies to everyone:

- Children think about what they want to do as adults and start to form ideas about work and adult life during their early childhood development.
- Adolescents make decisions about subjects and a course of study, they juggle school, part-time work, family and social interests.
- Adults work in the home, in paid employment, as volunteers, they work part and full time, have casual jobs and manage family life and social interests. They participate in a range of ongoing learning experiences throughout their adult lives. They may change several jobs, occupations and locations across their life time and will experience periods of unemployment, over employment and under employment. How they respond to these life challenges are all part of their career development.

Section 8, page 31 of Marrung – Career Services and Mentoring provides a platform and a great opportunity to formalize career planning for Koorie learners.

A review of career education in Victorian government schools was undertaken in 2017. The key findings were provided by Bernadette and are available on VAEAI's website – www.vaeai.org.au

DET commissioned [dandolopartners](#) to undertake the review:

- Focus on best practice for career education in Victoria
- Provide recommendation/ suggestion on what improvements could be made

General findings included:

- Career education varies significantly across Victorian government schools in both quantity and quality
- School size, location and socio-economic status doesn't explain the variation
- Schools vary in the degree to which they prioritise career education
- Mixed performance at both school level and system level

Recommendations of the report are embedded in the need for a professional career education service for students, not one that is variable and largely transactional in nature:

- Consistent, high-quality career education delivered in schools
- Support junior secondary students to develop sense of self and aspirations before making plans in addition to the focus on Years 10-12
- Provide multiple and meaningful work exposure opportunities including with industry
- Embed career education in teaching and learning programs across primary and secondary schools

The final report on the findings is due in September 2018.

Noted that it would be valuable to look at the review of career education in Victorian government schools undertaken in 2017 and consider areas for alignment with Marrung to support potential future policy changes.

The Australian Centre for Career Education offers programs that could be of interest to Forum participants:

- Career information for families/parents to help them understand language of education and careers so they can have meaningful conversations with their children,

- Plenty of resources for teachers and students
- Career counselling 3 days a week – one-on-one (at Greensborough but anyone can participate)
- Industry immersion sessions for students in Years 7-10 (e.g. 60 Digital Industry immersion sessions covering 10 emerging/thriving industries will be run over the next 2 years – 10 before Christmas this year)
- Tools to guide career planning sessions

There is a degree of skill to be a good practitioner. It would be good to see professional standards that are met by everyone.

State government is offering 400 scholarships for career development training.

Principles of quality career education include:

- The right questions – interests, values, talents and strength focused
- Allowing time for self-awareness, self-development and knowing meaning and purpose... "through finding meaning we find career"
- Celebration of diversity and uniqueness:
 - Explores challenges and barriers
 - Brings the family story along the journey
 - Doesn't present only one way
 - Person is central to the process
- Offers hope

For developing an approach/ focus to embed Koorie career education, need to consider:

- What is the current landscape regarding Koorie career education?
- What needs to change?

- How can we support Marrung to embed career education?
- Who do we need to work with and what can we offer?

ACCE also offers a range of conferences which can be found on their website one of which is in November 2018 – Career interventions to support mental health.



Aboriginal Economic Development – The Victorian Aboriginal Economic Board – Tim McCartney, Aboriginal Economic Broker, Department of Premier and Cabinet

The Victorian Aboriginal Economic Board (VAEB) was established under a commitment from the *Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy 2013-2020*.

The VAEB’s vision is to advance Aboriginal Victorians to a bright and prosperous future through economic empowerment, entrepreneurship, connection, culture and commerce.

The VAEB has initiative areas for 2018

- **Support placed based Aboriginal economic development initiatives**
 - 3 focus areas – Geelong, Mildura, Latrobe Valley
 - 3 Agreements have been signed off in each of these areas between a range of businesses, training providers and the Board

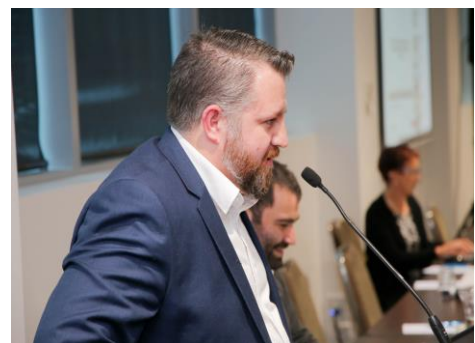
- Geelong successes include:
 - Barwon Water working with Gforce recruitment and Waan-Yarri Consulting – developed and launched their Reconciliation Action Plan. They include a range of wrap around services to support mentoring which has facilitated great outcomes in the program
 - Establishment of Geelong Aboriginal Employment Agreement Working Group
 - 2018 Geelong Small Business Festival
 - Establishing a network for New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS)

- Mildura successes include:
 - Koorie Girls Conference with Chaffey College
 - Development of Koori Digital Program with SuniTAFE Koori Unit
 - Geek Girls Program
 - Mildura Rural City Council Aboriginal business procurement policy
 - Establishing a network for New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS)

- Latrobe successes:
 - Aboriginal Economic Development Event (80 attendees)
 - Workshops on Aboriginal procurement, pathways to employment, business

- **Encourage Aboriginal entrepreneurialism and enterprise**
 - Research completed on Aboriginal Innovation and Dreaming Labs. Options coming out of the research included:
 - Tracks – a program where Aboriginal kids and their families engage in a tailored action learning program to cultivate

- community opportunities, develop business ideas and build their start up interests and capacity
 - Mobile Start Up Pathways Lab – a mobile program that tours Victoria to help local communities identify geographical barriers and provide access to resources
 - Pop-up project-based labs – boot camp and incubation support for prospective entrepreneurs
 - VAEB still in process of considering the options
 - Aboriginal Women in Business NAIDOC Video Series – features Karen Milward, Laura Thompson, Sarai Roe, Jody Barney, Perina Drummond, Janis Constable and Denni Fancisco
 - Note that many Koorie communities do a lot of volunteer work, and we need to consider how we support transitions into business development.
 - **Provide advice to government**
 - Ongoing role providing advice to Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, being a member of the Premier’s Job and Investment Panel
 - **Champion Aboriginal procurement**
 - Under Tharamba Bugheen – Aboriginal Economic Strategy the Victorian Government established a 1% procurement target for Aboriginal owned businesses to get government tendered work
 - **Connect and engage with key stakeholders**
 - Being connected and engaging with key industry bodies, Aboriginal state-wide
- and peak organisations, Kinaway, Local government etc is a key part of the work of the Board
- **Promote Aboriginal economic development opportunities**
 - Small Business Festival (1-31 August 2018)
 - Co-ordinated by Small Business Victoria, the Small Business Festival is run during the month of August across the state at 16 locations and over 400 events.
 - There are seven Aboriginal specific workshops
 - Getting into Aboriginal Business (Melbourne, Geelong, Morwell, Bendigo & Ballarat)
 - Getting your Retail Offering (Melbourne)
 - Procurement for Aboriginal Businesses – Navigating the supply chain (Melbourne)
 - **LaunchVic funding round seven**
 - Focus on investing in organisations to deliver new and existing entrepreneurial programs that improve access and participation in the Victorian startup ecosystem for Aboriginal Victoria





Aboriginal Languages Initiative - Tina Sahin, Wurreker Project Officer, VAEAI

Action 2 c) of the Marrung Education Plan aims to “increase the number of Koorie language programs in Victorian kindergartens and schools”.

The Victorian School of Languages has been engaged to develop and deliver Certificate III in Learning an Endangered Aboriginal Language and Certificate IV in Teaching an Endangered Aboriginal Language.

The VSL and is working with VACL and VAEAI to implement the Certificates.

Tina has been employed by VAEAI to:

- Provide support to the Victorian School of Languages to identify potential cohorts for both certificates
- Provide support to instructors
- Work with VCAL and DET to progress the project

Potential participants for both course have been asked to submit an Expression of Interest.

It is expected the courses will commence later in 2018.

Collaboration Frameworks – best practice in partnerships between training providers and employers – Group Exercise



The key factors that support best practice partnerships were found to be:

- Cultural Understanding
- Positive and Respectful Relationships
- Clear communication

Examples included:

- Monash Health – Brace Institute
- AFLSportsReady
- Barwon Water, GForce and Wan Yarli
- VACSAL Cert IV in Community Services develop in partnership with Koorie organisations
- Swinburne with Richmond Football Club
- Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust and Ambulance Victoria
- Box Hill TAFE and Box Hill Hospital
- WorkSafe and Wan Yarli

Summary – Neville Atkinson

Neville thanked everyone for coming as well as the presenters.

These forums is to bring people together who work in Koorie education and provide an opportunity for networking and sharing as well as to hear key information about what's going on in the space.

Neville mentioned he had been in VAEAI for 16 years and has seen the hard work that people put in – sometimes there are quick wins, but some of it takes much longer e.g. Closing the Gap in education. Victoria is doing a lot better than other states due to the hard work of people here today and the work of VAEAI.

There has been significant work since Marrung was launched in 2026 particularly around governance and creating the mechanisms that give real opportunities for community to have input around local issues as well as at the State level.

Eduard DeHue, DET, provided information about ReConnect which is giving opportunities to young people at risk and disengaged to get back into the raining system. The pre-accredited training is showing that it does work. Programs that use culture and connection to community are successful in engaging people and helping them get back on track and into further education.

Bernadette Gigliotti provided really good information on Career Planning, what is going on in terms of government direction and the work they are doing at the Australian Center for Career Education. A lot of this would be of real interest to participants at this forum. VAEAI sees the opportunities for everyone to do better in this space and wants to explore this further e.g. the development of Koorie specific career education programs.

Tim McCartney spoke of the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Board and the support available to

emerging Aboriginal businesses. There are great opportunities here for Aboriginal people. Community members volunteer a lot of their time and expertise, and even those people here who are heading for retirement speak about wanting to continue to give back. Perhaps rather than just volunteering there are some small business opportunities at hand. The government's Aboriginal business procurement policy and the support available under the VAEAB initiatives are worth thinking about.

Once again participants have been able to highlight the things that work well – best practice on the ground that is helping Koorie learners and their pathways through education, training and employment. Cultural understanding, positive and respectful relationships and clear communication are key factors in successful partnerships between training providers and employers.

Neville thanked everyone again for their participation. Feedback on the forum will be helpful to shape the next forum.

The next Forum will be held on Thursday 29th November. Details will be forwarded once available.

