Aboriginal education and training initiatives in NSW government schools

In 2009, over 46,000 Aboriginal students were enrolled in NSW government schools across the state.

Of this number more than 24,000 students were enrolled in primary schools, and 15,000 in secondary schools. Aboriginal student enrolments made up 5.5 percent of the total NSW public school population.

Two major programs that target Aboriginal education include;

- Norta Norta Program
- Schools in Partnership (SiP) Initiative

The Norta Norta Program funds schools to:

- provide learning assistance for Aboriginal Year 4, 6, 8 and 10 students;
- tutorial assistance for senior Aboriginal students;
- independent Learning Hubs for Aboriginal students from K-12; and
- tutoring/mentoring/leadership programs for Aboriginal students in middle and senior years.

Norta Norta funding for 2010 amounts to approximately $16 million; $6.8 million to provide tutorial assistance for Year 4, 6, 8, and 10 students and up to $9.2 million to provide tutorial assistance for Year 11 and 12 students.

A total of 701 schools and 2,211 Aboriginal students have been identified to receive Norta Norta Program funding in 2010.

In 2009 nearly 1,400 Year 11 and 12 Aboriginal students received the Individual sponsorship component of the program. An increased number is expected to apply in 2010.

The Schools in Partnership (SiP) Initiative assists schools with significant Aboriginal student numbers to improve student outcomes through implementation of targeted strategies developed in partnership with local school communities.

The focus of the initiative is to develop genuine partnerships with Aboriginal parents, communities and interagency groups and improve engagement with Aboriginal students through quality teaching practices to maximise educational outcomes for each student.

Schools in Partnership Initiative schools receive funding of between $30,000 to $240,000 to implement strategies that are directly related to improving teaching and learning outcomes and strengthening Aboriginal community engagement.

Eighty nine schools (69 individual schools and 20 schools operating across 5 Communities of Schools) will implement the Schools in Partnership initiative in 2010.

Personalised Learning Plans for Aboriginal students

To date, approximately 21,000 Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) have been developed and implemented for Aboriginal students across the state. The development and implementation of PLPs is in direct response to Recommendation 28 of the Review of Aboriginal Education (2004): ‘That each Aboriginal student have a personalised plan that will be developed by the school in partnership with parents/caregivers and include targets for learning against syllabus outcomes and agreed family support strategies’.