

MEDIA RELEASE

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Public urged to have their say in support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures in the Australian Curriculum

Australians who support the process of reconciliation in education are being urged to have their say in support of the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and culture in the Australian curriculum.

Eleven organisations have joined together to release an open statement, including Reconciliation Australia, principals' associations, education unions and Early Childhood Australia.

"We support calls from First Nations educators and the broader community to strengthen the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority in the current review of the Australian Curriculum," said Karen Mundine, CEO of Reconciliation Australia.

"We know that there is strong support in the Australian community for First Nations histories and cultures to be taught in schools.

"According to [Reconciliation Australia's 2020 Australian Reconciliation Barometer](#), over 80 per cent of the Australian community believe it's important, so we are calling on those members of the Australian public to have their say this week before the review closes," said Ms Mundine.

"Curriculum changes that better honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures and acknowledge the truths of Australia's shared history, respond to growing recognition of the education sector's responsibility to do more and do better to drive reconciliation across our nation," said Correna Haythorpe, Federal President of the Australian Education Union.

"The changes proposed by the review to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cross-curriculum priority and in key learning areas will contribute to strengthening what is already a large amount of positive learning happening in schools across our country," said Andrew Pierpoint, President of the Australian Secondary Principals' Association.

"The changes are also important in the context of teacher education," said Professor Peter Anderson, Director of the National Indigenous Research and Knowledges Network. "The curriculum provides important pointers for teachers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, but also for teachers who want to embed content about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in to their everyday teaching practice."

"Ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures are a part of the curriculum is an important part of our growth as a nation," said Dr John Davis, CEO of the Stronger Smarter Institute.

"We are encouraging all parents, teachers and community members who are engaged in this learning to have their say to support and strengthen this work in schools,"

-ENDS

A copy of the open statement is attached

Supporters can take the ACARA survey by Thursday 8 July at <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/consultation/cross-curriculum-priorities/>

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