

What can schools do now?

Following the initial rollout of Campfire Conversations, many schools are exploring how to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and communities in achieving self-determination in education.

To support self-determination effectively, it is critical for schools to reflect on their current practice before undertaking next steps.

The table below provides schools with a practical tool to assist reflection, conversation and action based on the findings of the Campfire Conversations.

	Reflect on Reform Directions	Possible actions
 <p>Accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → How is our commitment to strengthening outcomes and self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples reflected in our AIP/strategic planning? → How do all staff demonstrate their shared responsibility in this space? → How do we assess ourselves according to community's expectations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Prioritise a dedicated Marrung/Koorie Education focus in PDPs/AIPs. → Appoint a Marrung Champion to support staff with our responsibilities and practice. → Work with the KEW and community to identify meaningful success measures.
 <p>Truth-telling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Does our whole-school curriculum recognise the legacy and ongoing impacts of colonisation? → Do all of our subjects highlight the strength, diversity and enduring cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples? → How do we work with our families and community to ensure we support truth-telling respectfully and authentically? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Actively seek opportunities to learn about and incorporate the stories and experiences of local Aboriginal community including families. → Audit the curriculum for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across all learning areas and year levels. → Audit the library and curriculum resources to ensure the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and experiences are represented. → Engage people from the local school community (Traditional Owner group, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents/families) to ensure truth-telling is authentic and respectful.
 <p>Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → How do our parents/carers want to be involved in their children's education? → How do we engage meaningfully with our parents to support their children? → How can our school work with local community organisations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Host a Campfire Conversation. → Include parents and students in the development of IEPs. → Invite community to events beyond NAIDOC and Reconciliation Week. → Seek advice from the KEW on how to meaningfully and respectfully engage with community (including Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups, Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated, Traditional Owners). → Be mindful of, and seek ways to alleviate, cultural/colonial load of those who are regularly sought for their voice and expertise.
 <p>Culturally safe and responsive school system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → How do we know if our school is culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples? → How can we work with our local community to assess the cultural safety of our school? → How do we work with the local community to agree on and implement actions to increase representation and visibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culture and perspectives throughout the school environment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Adopt measures to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated, and strengthen supports for those who have experienced racism. → Develop and maintain policies and structures for reviewing the cultural safety of the school, in partnership with community (e.g., Campfire Conversations). → Partner with community to create yarning circles, Indigenous gardens and culturally safe places for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students and families to gather. → Be mindful of cultural/colonial load being placed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, parents/carers, workforce and community. → Ensure the responsibility to create a culturally safe and responsive school is shared by all at the school and not placed solely on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families/carers, and staff.
 <p>Voice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → How do we create space for deep listening and storytelling? → How do we amplify the voices and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families in our school? → How is our school being responsive to the voices of our local community? → How do we utilise the advice of the KEW in our decision-making? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Host a Campfire Conversation. → Facilitate opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to connect and share their perspectives. → Actively support opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student representation in decision-making. → Promote and support parent/community representation on school council. → Employ or engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who can bring cultural knowledge and expertise to the school (e.g., education support, health and wellbeing, Elders in residence, mentors, language teachers).
 <p>Capacity building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → How do we support our staff in understanding the learnings from this report? → How do we build the knowledge of our staff in identifying and supporting the aspirations and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students? → What resources, knowledge and tools are available to build the capacity of our staff? → How do we ensure our school is responsive to the aspirations of Treaty? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Review/develop our school's CUST action plan. → Explore professional learning opportunities hosted by Aboriginal people/organisations (e.g. cultural awareness, trauma and healing etc.) → Invite guest speakers from community and local organisations to work with the school. → Utilise resources and professional development offered by VAEAI.