

# PROTOCOLS

FOR KOORIE EDUCATION IN VICTORIAN PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS



VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION INC. (VAEAI)

The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association (VAEAI) has produced this guide – *Protocols for Koorie education in Victorian primary and secondary schools* – in response to requests for guidance on appropriate protocols for schools to follow when seeking to provide a welcoming school environment for Victoria’s Koorie communities, and for working respectfully with our Koorie community to enrich school curricula.





### THE WURREKER (Message Carriers)

*The story to the painting about Wile the Possum and Tyuling the Goanna. Wile and Tyuling are the totems of learning. They reach out to all Koorie communities to carry the message of the need for Koories to gain greater knowledge. The eight circles surrounding Wile and Tyuling represent the VAEI regions. Grey is the rock, blue is the rivers, green is the forest. The ninth circle in the centre of the pictures is the VAEI community. This is red: the heart of VAEI where all communities have their input.*

ARTIST: Kevin J. Williams

LANGUAGE: Wemba Wemba

MEDIUM: Acrylic on canvas



*All Koorie students deserve an education that enables them to fulfill their potential and achieve their ambitions.*

*The Koorie community wants our young people to be supported to excel in all fields. We also want Koorie students to have a strong sense of self and a strong sense of cultural identity.*

*We want our young Koories to know who they are and to be strong in this, both as individuals and as a part of their Communities.*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Geraldine Atkinson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Geraldine Atkinson

VAEAI PRESIDENT

# Contents

Page	
1	Introduction
2	Terminology
4	Intent
5	State-wide commitments to Koorie education <i>Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium, Koorie Education Policy 2001 Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026</i>
6	Valuing Koorie culture and heritage in the Victorian education sector
8	Values for early childhood and education services <i>For Koorie children For all Victorian children</i>
10	Protocols for engagement between Koorie communities and schools <i>Respectful communication Respectful partnerships between Koorie communities and schools</i>
12	Local protocols for schools when engaging with VAEAI and its LAECGs
13	Local protocols for working with dedicated Koorie Education Workers <i>Koorie Education Workforce Koorie Educators Local TAFE Koorie Liaison Officers</i>
15	Protocol for people approaching schools to offer services to Koorie students and families
16	Protocols for events <i>Welcome to Country Acknowledgement of Country</i>
17	Protocols for curriculum, teaching and learning <i>Content and resources from outside of Victoria Aboriginal students and families from outside Victoria Pre-service and In-service teacher training requirements Awareness of Eurocentrism</i>
21	Protocols for Koorie school children
24	Protocols for guest Koorie speakers in schools
25	Appendix 1 <i>State level protocols for delivery of education</i>
27	Appendix 2 <i>VAEAI's protocols for development of curriculum content and resources</i>
29	Resources



Wile the Possum and Tyuling the Goanna. Wile and Tyuling are the totems of learning.  
They reach out to all Koorie communities to carry the message of  
the need for Koories to gain greater knowledge.



# 1

## Introduction

The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association (VAEAI) has produced this guide – **Protocols for Koorie education in Victorian primary and secondary schools** – in response to requests for guidance on appropriate protocols for schools to follow when seeking to provide a welcoming school environment for Victoria’s Koorie communities and for working respectfully with our Koorie community to enrich school curricula.



*Namalaata, Office of VAEAI's Secretariat*

*As the peak Koorie education body in Victoria, VAEAI provides key advice to government on education and training development and delivery, including curriculum content and cultural training and resources for teachers and education personnel. VAEAI's advice is developed in partnership with the Koorie community; thus enabling it to represent the views of the community in assessing education or training affecting Koorie learners.*

*For more information about VAEAI's functions, history and current activities go to [www.vaeai.org.au](http://www.vaeai.org.au)*

*Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups are VAEAI's key constituents and are the primary source of advice on education and training matters. LAECGs participate as equal partners in the planning, development, operation, monitoring and evaluation of education programs containing Koorie content, at the local level.*

*The LAECGs are voluntary groups, with each member volunteering their time without remuneration according to their capacity to free up personal time.*

**Protocols for Koorie education in Victorian primary and secondary schools** has been discussed and authorised by VAEAI and representatives from VAEAI's LAECGs, or Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups. LAECGs are the vehicle through which Koorie parents, carers and community members can contribute to and have a say about any matter relating to education. LAECGs represent local Koorie community perspectives and have state-wide coverage.

**Protocols for Koorie education in Victorian primary and secondary schools** outline the foundational principles, procedures and behaviours requested of the education sector in Victoria in order to demonstrate respect to Koorie communities in Victoria.

At the same time, **Protocols for Koorie education in Victorian primary and secondary schools** cannot override the discrete cultural values and practices in our local Koorie communities. It is important that the protocols outlined here are discussed and refined in the context of building relationships and a working partnership between VAEAI's LAECGs and local school clusters or individual schools, in order to develop appropriate local practices for sound school-community partnerships of the various kinds required for positive and progressive school practice.

**Protocols for Koorie education in Victorian primary and secondary schools** contains examples of good principles and practice from selected already published protocol documents, and applies to all types of engagement and activities between schools and our local Koorie communities.

These protocols will help build learning partnerships among schools, teachers and our communities.

# 2

## Terminology

*The best way to find out which terms to use when referring to our community is to listen to Koorie community members themselves, and hear what term they use to describe themselves culturally.*

### PROTOCOL

*A protocol is an official and established code, procedure or behaviour.*

The values and protocols outlined in this document are for appropriate recognition, respect, and courtesies to be extended by education staff to Koorie Victorians engaged in the education sector - whether they are students, or adults from a local Koorie community in their roles as parents, carers, educators or leaders.

These protocols are also intended to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from other parts of Australia, now living in Victoria.

*“So for us protocol simply means following the customs and lores of the people or community you are working with; and communicating in a way which is relevant to us” (VAEAI members, 2007).*

The protocols in this booklet were endorsed by VAEAI’s Representative Council on the 24th of June, 2014.

### KOORIE

*Koorie is a contemporary collective or group term. Aboriginal people, whose traditional lands and waters exist within the boundaries that today frame the state of Victoria, are often collectively called Koorie peoples or Koories (sometimes spelt ‘Koori’).*

Further to the word ‘Koorie’, some Australian Indigenous people prefer to be called ‘Aboriginal’ while others prefer ‘Indigenous’. In the same way, some Indigenous people traditionally from the Torres Strait region prefer ‘Torres Strait Islander’ to ‘Islander’. From our community perspective, there has been a shift away from the term ‘Indigenous’ in favour of ‘Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander’, and sometimes ‘First Nations Peoples’. Most, but not all, Aboriginal people regard ‘Aborigine’ and ‘Aborigines’ as outdated and slightly derogatory but are quite happy with ‘Aboriginal’. Note that when referring to Australia’s First Peoples, upper case or capital ‘A’ and capital ‘I’ are used for Aboriginal and Indigenous Australians respectively.

The best way to find out which terms to use when referring to our community is to listen to Koorie community members themselves, and hear what term they use to describe themselves culturally.

Within the Protocols guide and across schools in Victoria, the term ‘Koorie’ is used inclusively to refer to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person living in Victoria.



## COUNTRY, NATION, MOB

*While a Language name is often the same name for Country and for people, sometimes the name of the language is different, eg Wurundjeri Country, Wurundjeri people, Woiwurrung language in parts of Melbourne and surrounds.*

Written with a capital 'C', Country refers to the traditional lands of a particular language or cultural group, eg. Boon Wurrung Country. This is commonly seen and heard in phrases such as 'Welcome to Country' and 'Acknowledgement of Country', "I grew up on Country", "We're taking students and families back to Country for language and culture workshops" etc. While a Language name is often the same name for Country and for people, sometimes the name of the language is different, eg Wurundjeri Country, Wurundjeri people, Woiwurrung language in parts of Melbourne and surrounds.

When talking about Country, people may also talk about Nation/s, as in "We pay our respects to the Kulin Nations". Nations refers to a larger grouping or federation of language groups, often combining a cluster of geographically, socially, politically and/or linguistically linked groups such as the Woiwurrung, Boon Wurrung, Wathaurong and Taungurung who together make up the eastern Kulin nations.

When talking about Country, people may also refer to a particular mob, as in "My mob are the Bangerang through my Mum and Wiradjuri through my Dad." Here mob refers to particular ethno-linguistic groups. Mob is commonly used in Koorie and more broadly Aboriginal English to refer to one's family, clan, Countrymen or language group.



*Young Koories performing traditional dance*

# 3

## Intent

*Aboriginal people have a spiritual, social, cultural and economic relationship with their traditional lands and waters, and have made a unique and irreplaceable contribution to the identity and well-being of Victoria.*

The intent of **Protocols for Koorie education in Victorian primary and secondary schools** is to promote common understandings and ways of operating that affirm the status and place of Koorie Victorians in the Victorian school education system.

As First Nations peoples, the Koorie community holds a unique position within Victoria. Every single one of our children comes from the lineages of rich and unique heritage of this country, and carries this forward into the future for generations of our people to come, as well as for all Australians.

In its constitution, the Victorian Parliament recognises Victoria's Aboriginal people as the original custodians of the land on which the Colony of Victoria was established; with a unique status as the descendants of Australia's first people. The constitution further recognises that Aboriginal People have a spiritual, social, cultural and economic relationship with their traditional lands and waters within Victoria, and have made a unique and irreplaceable contribution to the identity and well-being of Victoria (*Constitution Act 1975*).

## 4

## State-wide commitments to Koorie education

There are two major state-wide documents in Victoria which establish the ground for partnerships in school education.

*The Yalca policy places the Koorie student at the centre of education policy and decision making, and acknowledges that local Koorie communities through LAECGs are best able to determine local education and training needs.*

### YALCA: A PARTNERSHIP IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM, KOORIE EDUCATION POLICY 2001

Signed between the Premier of Victoria and the President of VAEAI, the *Yalca* policy places the Koorie student at the centre of education policy and decision making, and acknowledges that local Koorie communities through LAECGs are best able to determine local education and training needs. *Yalca* in its design requires partnership at all levels between Koorie communities and the education system.

*The Yalca policy can be found at:*

<http://www.vaeai.org.au/?ddownload=6275>

The importance of local partnerships is recognised as critical to ensuring that the priorities and goals of *Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium*, can be successfully delivered at the local and regional level. The role of the LAECGs is acknowledged as fundamental to achieving these outcomes.

LAECGs fulfil a significant role in providing the links between Koorie communities, the VAEAI structures, Government departments and education and training institutions. They are best placed to provide local perspectives on education and training matters and highlight the needs and aspirations of local Koorie communities.

### MARRUNG: ABORIGINAL EDUCATION PLAN 2016-2026

In 2016, a new 10-year Aboriginal Education Plan: Marrung was launched by the Victorian Department of Education (DET). Unlike Aboriginal education strategies and plans before it, Marrung encompasses Early Years, Schooling, VET and Higher Education, and places the Koorie Community at the core of its implementation. The Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan was co-developed by DET with the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency and Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation.

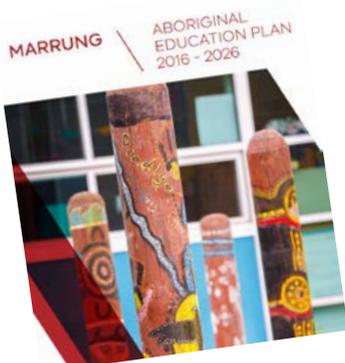
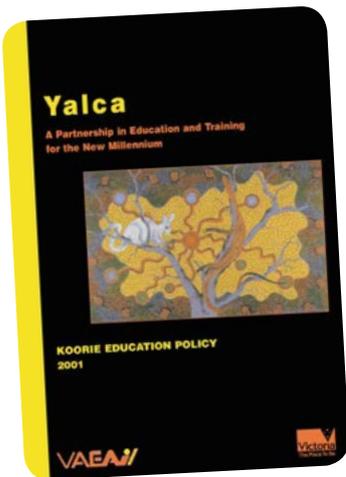
'Marrung' is the Wemba Wemba word for the Murray Cypress pine tree, representing branches of education and knowledge. We thank the Wemba Wemba people for allowing the use of their language in the naming of this plan.

*"The Victorian Government, through the Department of Education and Training, has worked with the Victorian Koorie community to develop Marrung. The Government has listened and has heard. Marrung sets out a 10 year vision and identifies the significant actions its achievement. From this plan there will be some ground-breaking change."*

—Geraldine Atkinson, President, VAEAI

*The Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan (2016-2026) can be found at*

<http://www.vaeai.org.au/?ddownload=6276>



## 5

## Valuing Koorie culture and heritage in the Victorian education sector

*Unfortunately, schools and the education sector more broadly have historically been locations of racism, exclusion and low expectations in Australia – which have largely contributed to the current gap in education and life outcomes between Koorie and non-Koorie Victorians today.*

Involving our Koorie community in all aspects of education and training in Victoria is an important step in the processes of reconciliation and self-determination.

Unfortunately, schools and the education sector more broadly have historically been locations of racism, exclusion and low expectations for Aboriginal students in Australia – which have largely contributed to the current gap in education and life-outcomes between Koorie and non-Koorie Victorians today.

The Koorie community has an invaluable role in contributing to education today and into the future – by imparting unique cultural knowledge and heritage to the broader community, our people are helping to fill the current gap that exists in Australian society’s knowledge about this country’s First Peoples. Moreover, our community has an inherent *human right* to be actively involved in the development and delivery of education to their children, as outlined in Article 14 of the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP):

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
2. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.
3. States shall, in conjunction with Indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for Indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language<sup>1</sup>.

Within Australia, recent developments in education at the national level similarly call for greater involvement of our First Peoples in education. The Australian Curriculum requires that schools incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders histories and cultures as one of three cross-curriculum priorities to be embedded across all subject areas. To supplement the Australian Curriculum, the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) has outlined new Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST), which include requirements for both the teaching of Koorie students as well as teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content to all students.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). Accessed [http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)

The APST requires that all teachers possess specific training and experience in:

*Efforts such as these represent important contributions in the process of righting historical wrongs, and respectfully acknowledging the continued importance and relevance of indigenous cultures in contemporary societies across the world.*

#### Focus area 1.4: STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS:

- Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity and linguistic background on the education of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

#### FOCUS AREA 2.4: UNDERSTAND AND RESPECT ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE TO PROMOTE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS:

- Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages<sup>2</sup>.

Efforts such as those represented by the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples and these national standards represent important contributions in the process of righting historical wrongs, and respectfully acknowledging the continued importance and relevance of indigenous cultures in contemporary societies across the world.

Ultimately, by ensuring that the current generation of Australian students grow up with a greater knowledge and understanding of their fellow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander citizens than did past generations of Australians, we can hope and expect to see the development of greater relations, conciliation and equality for all.

*Display from the Thornbury Primary School Woiwurrung Language Program*



<sup>2</sup> National Professional Standards for Teachers (2011). Accessed <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/australian-professional-standards-for-teachers/standards/List>

# 6

## Values for early childhood and education services

*Every Koorie child in Victoria is precious. We honour our Koorie children, a commitment which starts in early childhood and continues throughout life.*

### FOR KOORIE CHILDREN

Every Koorie child in Victoria is precious. We honour our Koorie children, a commitment which starts in early childhood and continues throughout life.

Our core values are *nurture* and *aspiration*:

- to nurture each and all Koorie children as they grow to become custodians and protectors in their communities of their unique heritage, and contribute this special heritage to the whole Victorian community; and
- to provide education and training services and pathways which will wholly meet their aspirations for success in their own lives and families.

Strategy and actions recommended by our Koorie community are:

- child-centred, and individual-focused - self-determination in policy and in action
- family oriented and success oriented - family-determination in policy and in action from early childhood onwards
- unapologetically proactive in addressing 'closing the gap', for vulnerable children, where the data shows a continuing gap in participation and outcomes between Koorie Victorians and other Victorians - no gap is acceptable in today's world
- respectful of gender.

Further to the final dot point, aspects of teaching to our Koorie students which might extend into traditional, and sacred gender-held business, sometimes referred to as 'women's business' or 'men's business', need to be respected as such. If there is any confusion or question about whether some curriculum content is dipping into gender business, teachers are advised to consult with their local LAECG or VAEAI, or check with their region's Koorie Education Coordinator.

## FOR ALL VICTORIAN CHILDREN

Education curricula from Foundation (Preparatory) Year through to Year 10 - aligned to the Australian Curriculum and delivered in Victoria through the Victorian Curriculum - are required to incorporate Aboriginal histories and cultures in their teaching program across most learning areas, so that all children are taught about the histories and heritage, cultures and perspectives of Australia's First Peoples.

All Victorian students need to learn to appreciate:

- the natural sovereignty which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples held across Australia prior to invasion, colonisation and Federation; and still hold
- the major events which have affected Koorie communities since colonisation
- the richness of heritage which today's First Peoples hold for Australia and which benefits all Victorians, and the richness of our current living cultures
- the invaluable contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People to the development of this nation
- the Koorie community in Victoria are many peoples - incorporating 35-40 language groups<sup>3</sup>
- Victoria is also home today for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from many groups from across other parts of Australia
- identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is determined only by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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<sup>3</sup> For more information go to the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages at <http://www.vaclang.org.au/> (also go to <http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/alcv/History.pdf>)

## 7

## Protocols for engagement between Koorie communities and schools

Any engagement between a school and our Koorie community in Victoria should be guided by the principles of the state-wide *Yalca* policy, outlined in section 4, and endorsed Koorie education plan.

### RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

In Victoria, Elders and other respected people from our communities are often heard referred to in English with the title of 'Aunty' or 'Uncle', as also occurs elsewhere in Australia.

'Aunty' or 'Uncle' is respectful recognition of an Elder's or respected person's role in their community. In formal or ceremonial settings for example, an official Welcome to Country ceremony is always conducted by an Elder where an Elder is available (see Section 8 below for more information on Welcome to Country). Formally, an Elder is one who belongs to the group of people on whose lands the ceremony is being held, the group who are traditional owners.

'Aunty' or 'Uncle' is also used for relatives who are direct aunts or uncles - ie the same as primarily English speaking non-Indigenous families do.

'Aunty' or 'Uncle' is also used informally across Koorie extended families to show respect for generational seniority; for example extension of aunty or uncle title sometimes to cousins who are of an older generation, or in other roles commanding intergenerational respect within the community, for example Koorie childcare workers being called aunty or uncle by the children they look after.

'Aunty' or 'Uncle' is also used informally to show respect by non-Indigenous people though a little differently as they are not Koorie community members.

As such:

- It is recommended that a non-Indigenous person should hold back from using the 'Aunty' or 'Uncle' title in one-on-one communication unless the Elder or respected person has invited the non-Indigenous person to use the 'Aunty' or 'Uncle' title, or another Koorie community member has recommended this use of 'Aunty' or 'Uncle'
- In other words, in one-on-one conversation with an Elder or respected person, a non-Indigenous person is advised to not 'get too familiar' by using their title unless that person has been introduced or has introduced themselves, using this title.



*Partnerships require clear roles between the school and local Koorie community and the appropriate, precise defining of roles of members of our community and education personnel. By agreeing clearly who does what, partnerships can flourish.*

## RESPECTFUL PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN KOORIE COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOLS

There are two main types of partnership between our Koorie communities and schools:

- partnerships for the successful education of each Koorie child
- partnerships for embedding and delivering learning about local Koorie histories and heritage, culture and perspectives across the Victorian Curriculum, for all Victorian children.

Both types of partnership, to be delivered respectfully and appropriately, must be guided by the Koorie community – for example:

- a partnership between Koorie parents and teachers for the development and monitoring of a student’s Individual Education Plan, including Koorie Student and Family Support Plans through the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/curriculum/Pages/koorie.aspx>

- a partnership between LAECG and school for delivering local content and perspectives in the Victorian Curriculum, being taught to all school students.

**Partnerships require clear roles between the school and local Koorie community and the appropriate, precise defining of roles of members of our community and education personnel. By agreeing clearly who does what, partnerships can flourish. Without clarity and continuing relationships, partnerships fall away, and the child or student is not served well. Partnership means at all stages - planning, development, implementation and review – of any project or service.**

*For information on the statewide level protocols between the VAEAI Secretariat and DET Central Office; and between groups of LAECGs and their corresponding DET Regional Office, see Appendix 1. Outlined below are local protocols for schools to follow.*

*For information on Koorie School-Community Partnership Agreements and how your local school and community can work towards its development, see VAEAI’s “The Koorie Parent and Community Engagement Model” booklet available at*

<http://www.vaeai.org.au/?ddownload=7524>

*Does your school know the LAECG representatives in your area? For up to date information on the chairperson of each LAECG go to*

<https://www.vaeai.org.au/local-aboriginal-education-consultative-groups/>

## 8

## Local protocols for schools when engaging with VAEAI & its LAECGs

*Any provision of education services involving Koorie children or Koorie curriculum should be done in consultation with the appropriate LAECG/s in the region.*

*Within a context of self-determination and the Yalca Koorie education policy (see section 4) – schools must understand that non-Koorie people cannot know, determine and direct what is appropriate for Koorie Victorians. Therefore a set of local and state level protocols for the delivery of education and training services have been developed through the Yalca policy, to assist schools and education providers in partnering with the Koorie community through Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (LAECGs).*

1. VAEAI's LAECGs are made up of local Koorie community members who volunteer their time because they want to see better outcomes for our people through education and training.
2. LAECGs are recognised as the primary source of advice on education and training matters at the local level.
3. LAECGs participate as equal partners in the planning, development, operation, monitoring and evaluation of local education programs containing Koorie content.
4. Central and Regional DET staff will ensure that they work together with VAEAI and its LAECGs to implement this partnership.
5. Any provision of education services involving Koorie children or Koorie curriculum should be done in consultation with the appropriate LAECG/s in the region.
6. New education and training initiatives for Koorie children or curriculum containing Koorie content, will be approved and commenced at a school only after they have been endorsed by VAEAI.

In locations where there is no active LAECG, or the LAECG is unavailable to assist, schools and education providers are encouraged to seek advice and assistance from VAEAI.

*For more information on the LAECGs go to*

<https://www.vaeai.org.au/local-aboriginal-education-consultative-groups/>

## 9

# Local protocols for working with dedicated Koorie Education Workers

## KOORIE EDUCATION WORKFORCE

The DET Koorie Education Workforce (KEW) is made up of Koorie Education Coordinators (KECs) and Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) across Victoria, and provides a unique support for Koorie children, families and service providers, particularly schools.

The KEW's role is to facilitate positive engagement between our Koorie students and families with schools - particularly teachers, and other needed services. The KEW assists with the development and strengthening of family/community-school relationships, including brokering better educational arrangements for Koorie children and resolution of any issues between families and schools.

KESOs provide a special support service for families, for example by facilitating the development and monitoring of individual education plans for students and connecting families and teachers in ways of best benefit to each child.

Each KESO is responsible for connecting local families and carers with schools and individual teachers, as needed to serve each Koorie child, and for brokering the resolution of any issues identified as important for ensuring the educational progress and success of each Koorie student. While KESOs are directly accountable to their employer, DET, they cannot perform their job role effectively, without demonstrated partnership with, and respect from, the Koorie communities in the area in which the KESO works.

In turn, each LAECG is also responsible for ensuring that open communication and respectful partnership is offered to their local KESO/s, and for supporting KESOs to work with schools and families, and solve local issues affecting students and community.

*A school, teacher, parent or carer can find out the contact details for their local KESO and regional KEC from their DET Regional Office, or by visiting*

<https://www.education.uic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/marrungregional.aspx>

## KOORIE EDUCATORS

On the whole, Koorie Educators (KEs) provide a similar student support and engagement function. However as each KE is employed directly by their individual school, each school may tailor the position description of their Koorie Educator to best suit their localised needs and priorities. For example, Koorie Educators may be focused on supporting the inclusion of Koorie cultures, histories and languages in the classroom, and be more involved with providing supports to Koorie students and liaising directly with Koorie families. Not all schools employ KEs.

Similarly to the KEW (KECs and KESOs), KEs should ideally work closely with their local LAECG and other teaching staff, in implementing Koorie content in the curriculum, and assisting Koorie students to achieve to their highest potential.

*A list of LAECGs can be found at*

<https://www.vaeai.org.au/local-aboriginal-education-consultative-groups/>

*and further contact details can be obtained by contacting VAEAI at [vaeai@vaeai.org.au](mailto:vaeai@vaeai.org.au) or (03) 9481 0800.*

## LOCAL TAFE KOORIE LIAISON OFFICERS

Most Victorian TAFE institutes have Koorie Units with dedicated Koorie staff – Koorie Liaison Officers (KLOs) – employed specifically to assist Koorie students to choose their post-school pathway and their course, to assist students throughout their studies or training, and then, into further education or employment. KLOs provide practical assistance such as course information, guidance about pathways into employment or further education/training, Abstudy/Centrelink information, and tutoring. The KLO also supports students by liaising with staff and faculties/departments in their institute.

KLOs assist training institutes to:

- understand Koorie student needs
- increase and support Koorie participation and completion in courses
- understand local Koorie community aspirations and issues
- appreciate and deliver a culturally-sensitive environment for Koorie students.

Knowing about vocational, education and training (VET) options opens up important opportunities for our students; and secondary school teachers and school careers advisers should encourage Koorie students to connect with the KLO in their region.

A KLO may approach a school to identify if there are Koorie students, to ensure that they and their families are aware of the supports and opportunities available to consider and pursue a VET course. It works best if the KLO is directed to the school careers adviser so they can work together to identify options for each Koorie student's education and training pathway, and a coordinated, personalised service is provided to each student at the school about their VET and university options.

The KLO is a potentially important resource to students and families considering all post-school options and supports – KLOs are not singly focused on a 'recruitment drive' for their TAFE Institute.

*To learn more about supports in the TAFE sector, visit VAEAI's website here*

<http://www.vaeai.org.au/support/>

# 10

## Protocol for people approaching schools to offer services to Koorie students & families

*Our Koorie community asks that these approaches be redirected promptly to the local KEC and LAECG, who will consider the offered project or program after a presentation is made to them.*

From time to time there are approaches to schools by organisations or individuals wanting to access Koorie students directly, and/or their families, to promote and engage them in various Indigenous projects or programs, including research projects.

We ask that these approaches be redirected promptly to the local KEC, LAECG, and/or VAEAI, who will consider the offered project or program after a presentation is made to them. The VAEAI Secretariat (based in Northcote) is also able to be involved in this process where needed, on behalf of the local Koorie community.

After the KEC and LAECG liaise, they can advise the school/s of the community's view on the proposed offer; and where agreed students and families can be then contacted by their local KESO for them to consider taking up the offer.

VAEAI can help direct schools to their LAECG where needed, assist directly in regions where there is no LAECG and/or be part of the consultation process where the LAECG is unavailable or unable to assist.

This protocol places an appropriate buffer and screening process for unexpected approaches to schools that may be harmful to our students, or otherwise inappropriate for Koorie families.

## 11

# Protocols for events

*It may be appropriate for another member of the Traditional Owner group – for example, a student – to undertake a Welcome to Country, as agreed by the Community.*

Throughout Australia, responsibilities to look after or ‘Care for Country’ are held by distinct clan and family groups and individuals. Senior people in our community who are responsible for traditional lands and water are often referred to as ‘Traditional Owners’.

The Wannik Guide for Victorian schools, **Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country**, developed in partnership between VAEAI and DET, sets out the protocols for respectful acknowledgement of and ceremony involving the Traditional Owners across Victoria. The Guide’s introduction states in part: “For Victorian schools, becoming familiar with the basic protocols involved with conducting a Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country is a fundamental first step in developing a positive and meaningful relationship with the local Koorie community.”

## WELCOME TO COUNTRY

An official Welcome to Country *can only be provided by a member of the Traditional Owner group from the Country where the event is taking place*, and is performed on ceremonial and other significant occasions to follow traditional protocols and show appropriate respect. Whilst it is customary for an Elder from the Traditional Owner group to officiate the Welcome to Country, it may be appropriate for another member of the Traditional Owner group – for example, a student at a school event – to convene a Welcome to Country. The right to welcome people on one’s land is an inviolable right. Welcome to Country therefore is a fundamental and traditional practice, and should be included in all formal occasions to honour our First Nations peoples, and demonstrate a genuine respect for Koorie culture, and traditional practices.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

An Acknowledgement of Country, as opposed to a formal Welcome to Country, *can be performed by anyone (Indigenous or non-Indigenous)*, to show appropriate respect, following traditional protocols.

*For detailed advice on Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, the Wannik Guide can be accessed at*

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/welcomecountry.pdf>

*Further information about Traditional Owner groups in Victoria, including a map of Registered Aboriginal Parties, can be found at*

<https://aboriginalheritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/victorias-registered-aboriginal-parties>

*Wurundjeri Elder  
Aunty Di Kerr  
giving a Welcome to Country  
in Northcote, Melbourne.*



## Protocols for curriculum, teaching and learning

1. Recognition and respect is the fundamental value for curriculum, teaching and learning in Victoria about our First People's history, culture and perspectives, along with developing knowledge of and understanding about the diversity of communities and cultural groups.
2. Koorie people speak for their local communities.
3. Koorie children are not to be singled out in schools as 'experts' on Koorie cultures, histories and other aspects of curriculum – local knowledge and wisdom as contributions to curriculum can be sourced from LAECGs, VAEAI, the KEW and a range of local Koorie community-based organisations.
4. Curriculum content and resources covering any aspects of our history, culture, values and perspectives should be endorsed by the local Koorie community – for schools this means your local LAECG should ideally be invited to partner in the development of your school curriculum plans; and be invited as guest speakers at school. We greatly encourage dialogue with parents, LAECGs and other appropriate community groups to provide a rich, context accurate curriculum for all students.
5. Curriculum resources developed by LAECGs, VAEAI, or a Koorie person cannot be appropriated and owned by the education system. Intellectual Property (IP) rights or moral authorship of the individual or community need to be respected and acknowledged; and any other rights negotiated (such as a licensing agreement to use artwork). Appendix 2 outlines in detail VAEAI's protocols for development of curriculum content and resources.
6. Recognition that family comes first is a core value for our people and this is a lived priority.

Our people maintain that strong communities are built from strong families – this means priority to family is being lived every day in families, and therefore members of our community must often attend to family business before all else. More generally, flexibility for our students and families to attend to cultural and community responsibilities is equally important. Accordingly, teachers are asked to be flexible with Koorie students, parents and Koorie guest speakers in schools, to respect family and community priorities and often unforeseen circumstances.

### ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURES AND HISTORIES CONTENT AND RESOURCES FROM OUTSIDE OF VICTORIA

Local Koorie cultural and historical content should be a priority focus and tapped into wherever possible and appropriate, following a Koorie community-preferred education model which focuses at the local level first (ask yourself whose land or Country the school is situated on), followed by regional, state, national and international indigenous perspectives.

*When teaching Koorie perspectives (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures) apply a model which focuses at the local level first, followed by regional, state, national and international indigenous perspectives.*

Having said this, schools need to appreciate and acknowledge that this local content may not be representative of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the school, whose families may have moved to the area from other parts of the state or country. It is therefore also important to include material about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and histories from other regions of the state, and parts of the country - not only for these students, but for all students at the school, following the Koorie community-preferred model. It is best practice to identify where each teaching resource comes from, for example "this is a creation story told by the Gunditjmara people of south-west Victoria" or "we're about to watch a dance performed by Yolngu women from East Arnhem Land."

Maps of Aboriginal Australia identifying cultural language groups such as the Aboriginal Languages of Victoria (VACL) and Aboriginal Australia (Horton: AIATSIS) wall maps are useful classroom resources allowing students to identify the region they come from, and for teachers to point to the area of Australia and the Aboriginal cultural group relevant to each resource. Aboriginal Languages of Victoria is available from the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL) directly, with a downloadable A4 version at

<http://www.vaclang.org.au/item/aboriginal-languages-of-victoria.html>

and the Aboriginal Australia wall map (AIATSIS) is available at

<http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/asp/map.html>

## ABORIGINAL STUDENTS AND FAMILIES FROM OUTSIDE VICTORIA

In Victorian schools, protocols for teaching and interacting with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students from outside of Victoria do not differ from those for Victorian Koorie students and families.

It is important for schools to acknowledge and respect the distinct Country, culture and history of any Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander individual, whether they are from Victoria or elsewhere in Australia.

## PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Under the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, all pre-service and in-service

*Under the new Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, all pre-service and in-service teachers will be required to demonstrate detailed competencies in both the teaching of Koorie students, and of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content to all students.*

teachers will be required to demonstrate detailed competencies in both the teaching of Koorie students, and of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content to all students.<sup>4</sup>

All in-service teachers and other practising education staff are asked to undertake professional development (PD) to ensure they have the skills and confidence to:

- teach Koorie students in a culturally-sensitive, appropriate way
- demonstrate, through example, the importance of the school environment being culturally inclusive and appropriate for Koorie students and families
- incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and perspectives in their teachings.

Schools or teachers can seek information on PD options from the Learning and Teaching Division, DET Central Office, or the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).

All pre-service teachers currently studying at university are asked to develop the skills necessary to teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies in the classroom, and specifically, to learn to teach Koorie students in an effective, appropriate, culturally-sensitive way.

Pre-service teachers can seek information on available modules from their university faculty, or the VIT.

*The VAEAI website offers a variety of resources to assist pre-service and in-service teachers and can be accessed at*

<http://www.vaeai.org.au/documents/>

## AWARENESS OF EUROCENTRISM

Eurocentrism is seeing the world from a European perspective, denying the perspectives and experiences of non-Europeans.

Reconciliation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples requires that schools and teachers commit to ensure eurocentrism is not alive in curriculum as it can foster or nurture serious inaccuracies and biases that inhibit reconciliation and can lead to racist beliefs.

## THINKING ABOUT EUROCENTRISM

For example, accurate understanding and teaching of Australia's history should be founded upon Australia's complex, ancient Indigenous cultural history, not on recent examples in the last 200 years of Europeans discovering aspects of Australia that have been well known by our First Peoples for tens

<sup>4</sup> For more information see Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4 of <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/australian-professional-standards-for-teachers/standards/List>

*An accurate understanding and teaching of Australia's history should be founded upon Australia's complex, ancient Indigenous cultural history, not on recent examples in the last 200 years of Europeans discovering aspects of Australia that have been well known by our First Peoples for tens of thousands of years.*

of thousands of years. For example:

- 'Lawrence Hargraves discovered gold in New South Wales' - **WRONG**
- 'Lawrence Hargraves was the first European to have his finding of gold, on Wiradjuri land, made public' - **CORRECT**

In the first statement, the facts that the 'discovery' was on Wiradjuri land and that Wiradjuri people knew of gold long before, are left out rendering the teaching Eurocentric. The second statement is more factually enriched and correct by incorporating an Aboriginal perspective in the teaching.

# Protocols for Koorie school children

*It is especially important for Koorie students to learn from their community role models, and also for all Australian children to have opportunity to learn from Koorie adults.*

## INDIVIDUALLY FOCUSED INTEGRATED SERVICES FOR EACH CHILD

Closing the gap between the educational outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students is a state and national priority.

In Victoria, The Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026 for Koorie students requires all government schools to prepare Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Career Action Plans, and Transition Plans where relevant, for every Koorie student in their school, so that issues identified with literacy, maths and science skills are addressed as early as possible. This plan is developed in partnership with the student, their parent or caregiver and, if required, a Koorie support worker, and regularly revised with all concerned. Each plan may also cover key transition points (pre-school to school; primary to secondary; compulsory to post-compulsory) and should be linked to any Career Action Plan.

In primary schools, the class teacher is accountable to the child's parents or carers and to the Principal, to develop - together with the student and their family - an active IEP that is monitored and reviewed regularly.

In secondary schools, the Principal is required to allocate a teacher to develop the IEP for each Koorie student, in partnership with the student and their family.

In either case, the local KESO is responsible for assisting the school, where needed, to address any issues which have an impact on our children's experience and achievement at school.

## INTEGRATED SERVICES FOR KOORIE CHILDREN AS A GROUP IN A SCHOOL

In schools with a number of Koorie students, school staff are asked to work in partnership with their LAECG to ensure that there is the optimum mix of learning and teaching arrangements in place for those student groups. The best education for our children combines their community with their school in a planned and systematic partnership. It also, most importantly, encourages a strong sense of belonging, identity and support for children.

Also, working together in partnership with local Koorie community members assists educators to:

- develop more appropriate teaching and learning practices for Koorie students based on a better understanding of their community experiences
- develop understanding and sensitivity about aspects of recent colonisation history experienced by recent and current generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Victoria and Australia; and the continuing deep distress resulting from experiences such as forced relocation, the Stolen Generations and struggles for Land Rights and Native Title recognition - and the effects of these events on identity

- identify adults from our Community who are prepared to come to school to share their experiences and knowledge with students – it is especially important for Koorie students to learn from their community role models, and also for all Australian children to have the opportunity to learn from Koorie adults.

*VAEAI has published a Guide to Koorie School-Community Partnership Agreements, which can be accessed at*

<https://www.vaeai.org.au/?download=7524>

The Guide provides a step-by-step approach for schools and communities in developing their own Agreement.

## CENTRES FOR CULTURAL LEARNING

VAEAI has developed a proposal for the development of *Centres for Cultural Learning*, or 'Cultural Hubs' in schools. The purpose of the Hubs is to provide a physical space on school grounds which is dedicated to the teaching and promotion of Koorie culture. The Hubs would house teaching resources such as books, artefacts and tools, and could be used to host cultural events and deliver professional training to teachers and the wider community.

*For more information go to*

<https://www.vaeai.org.au/?download=7522>

## RESPECTING KOORIE ENGLISH

It is common in Victoria for our Koorie students to speak amongst their families and communities in what is known as Koorie English, which is a distinct Australian English dialect that incorporates Koorie specific phrasing, idioms, forms of address and humour.

In 2012, VAEAI undertook research into the role and importance of Koorie English for Victorian Koorie students, and in particular code-switching.

“Code-switching refers to a person’s ability to move back and forth between two languages or dialects depending on who they are speaking to and in what context. Code-switching is also a skill that people of multi-cultural and bi-lingual backgrounds have long recognised as necessary for success within mainstream education and employment.

Koorie students often attain code-switching skills naturally, as they switch from speaking Koorie English in the home and amongst family and peers, to Standard Australian English (SAE) in the classroom and more formal environments. When this skill is encouraged, Koorie students are able to gain a full grasp of the SAE required for academic achievement, while maintaining a strong cultural identity through the geographical and kinship linkages associated with their home language.

*It is common in Victoria for our Koorie students to speak amongst their families and communities in what is known as Koorie English, which is a distinct Australian English dialect that incorporates Koorie specific phrasing, idioms, forms of address and humour.*

Problems occur when Koorie English (KE) or Aboriginal English (AE) is dismissed as a form of 'bad' or 'inferior' English and corrected as such. This [is not only factually wrong, it] undermines the student's code-switching abilities and devalues the language of their family and peers, which can lead to disengagement in the classroom and with school-based learning. Just like children whose first language is not English, Koorie English speakers do better at school when their home language is affirmed."<sup>5</sup>

Koorie English Online: During 2019, a set of resources were developed for teachers in early childhood, primary and secondary school settings. They aim to promote awareness about Koorie English and associated teaching strategies to help strengthen literacy outcomes for Koorie English speakers. The modules have drawn heavily from the Koorie English Teacher Guidance Package digital resource available on FUSE .

For more information go to

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/Pages/introduction-koorie-english-online.aspx>

5 Koorie English and Code-switching in Schools: is it a problem and, if so where is it a problem and what potential solutions are available? *A report to DET from VAEAI, February 2013.*

## 14

## Protocols for guest Koorie speakers in schools

*Koorie community members are best placed to share cultural knowledge and expertise with schools, and presentations by local Koorie people should be incorporated into lesson plans and school events.*

In light of increased expectations and requirements of schools with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies, as outlined in the Australian Curriculum, we can expect a greater role for our Koorie community members within their local schools. Koorie community members are best placed to share cultural knowledge and expertise with schools, and presentations by local Koorie people should be incorporated into lesson plans and school events.

When inviting a local member of our community to share their knowledge, the school should:

- Ask the LAECG to nominate a community representative/s, or if an individual has already been recommended advise the LAECG, and ensure the LAECG that the guest speaker will be treated with care and respect
- Arrange to spend time with the guest speaker before the classroom or school event, to discuss the curriculum topics and plan, especially to check if there are any sensitivity issues, and to build trust
- Discuss any fees and reimbursement costs and plan accordingly
- Arrange any travel and transport requirements for the guest speaker if they need it
- Encourage the guest speaker to bring a family member or friend with them for support, especially if there is any concern about coming to the school alone
- Discuss any assistance needed or difficulties such as wheelchair access or no stairs (low steps)
- Provide a welcoming, informal setting for the guest speaker (eg. in a classroom have chairs in a circle)
- Ensure students know the title and name of the guest speaker they must use to show respect
- Ensure the guest speaker knows that they do not need to discuss anything, or answer any questions, that they are not comfortable with - and should the session become unexpectedly uncomfortable for them then they have free choice to withdraw from it
- Ensure the guest speaker knows that the teacher and school will not condone any student misbehavior, and should any occur, that the teacher will respond immediately.

# Appendix 1

*In 2013 VAEAI developed a Koorie education community consultation model which reflects the VAEAI-DET partnership at the local, regional and state levels. This Community Consultation Model is embedded in the Marrung governance structure, and positions local and regional Koorie communities, through their LAECGs, to facilitate closer engagement and collaboration with each Departmental Regional Office.*

## STATE LEVEL PROTOCOLS FOR DELIVERY OF EDUCATION

These protocols are positioned within a context of self-determination under the Yalca policy, and assert that non-Koorie people cannot know, determine or direct what is most appropriate for Koorie learners in Victoria.

VAEAI-DET protocols within the Victorian education sector:

1. VAEAI is an equal partner with the Victorian Government in the education and training of Koorie Victorians; and recognised as the primary source of advice on Koorie education.
2. VAEAI will participate as an equal partner with government agencies in the planning, development, implementation, operation, monitoring and evaluation of education programs at statewide level.
3. Government agencies and VAEAI have direct responsibility to inform each other of any planned changes to specific education and training funding that impacts on the achievement of improved educational outcomes and service delivery for Koorie students, and work in consultation so that these changes reflect community needs and aspirations and consider all information including relevant data.
4. Government agencies and VAEAI will work together in partnership on the planning, development and delivery of educational and support services for Koorie people.
5. Government agencies and VAEAI will maintain continuous communication links in relation to the development of projects and the emerging needs of the Koorie community.

## PROTOCOLS BETWEEN LAECGs & THE DET REGIONAL OFFICES

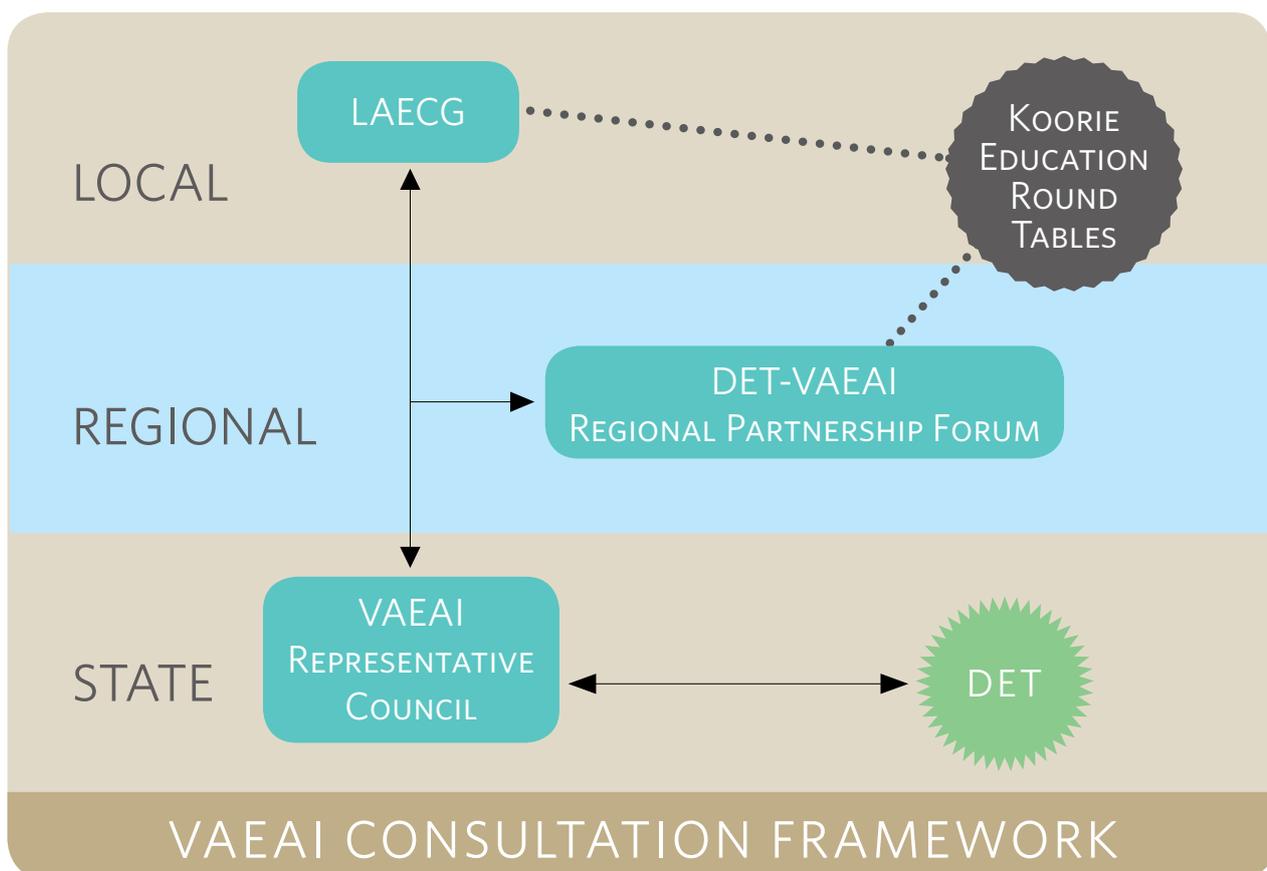
VAEAI's LAECGs are increasingly involved at all stages of Koorie education and training.

VAEAI has recognised the growing practical and strategic need for an easier, more effective interface between the LAECGs and the Department of Education and Training. Accordingly, in 2013 VAEAI developed a Koorie education community consultation model which progressively embeds a new regional DET-VAEAI partnership. This Community Consultation Model is embedded in the Marrung governance structure, and positions local and regional Koorie communities, through their LAECGs, to facilitate closer engagement and collaboration with each Departmental Regional Office. This model utilises Koorie Education Roundtables, convened by VAEAI, to facilitate local clusters of VAEAI members and LAECGs coming together to provide a coordinated structured process at the local level for capturing a comprehensive account of educational matters important to the local Koorie community. These matters can then be synthesised, prioritised and addressed locally, whilst monitoring the progress of Koorie students, with particular attention to those needing supports.

Each Roundtable in turn connects to and works in partnership with their appropriate DET Regional Office via a DET-VAEAI Regional Partnership Forum, as per the diagram below. The DET-VAEAI Regional Partnership Forum format operates within each DET region of Victoria and brings together local VAEAI members and the Department to:

The DET-VAEAI Regional Partnership Forum format will operate within each DET region of Victoria and bring together local VAEAI members and the Department to:

- identify mutual priorities and a strategic approach between Koorie community and the Department along with its service providers; and
- specifically to provide an appropriately structured opportunity for VAEAI members to strengthen their leadership role on Koorie education and training matters on behalf of their Koorie community on an ongoing basis.



## Appendix 2

### VAEAI'S PROTOCOLS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM CONTENT AND RESOURCES

The Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Corporation (FATSIL) **Guide to Community Protocols for Indigenous Language Projects**<sup>6</sup> was developed in 2004 following national consultation, and is a community driven guide to working respectfully with, and for the best benefit of, Indigenous communities, while being involved in community-based Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language projects.

VAEAI endorses these protocols for working with Koorie communities, and believes that they equally apply to working with Koorie communities in education and early childhood settings, in the development and delivery of curriculum content; and in the development of resources to support learning. For this reason, we have included certain sections as an appendix, with a link to the full Guide below.

The FATSIL Guide states; 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are the custodians of their cultural and linguistic heritage. The lived experience Indigenous people have of their languages should be valued and respected as highly as the technical knowledge which consultants bring to a project. Communities' custodianship of their languages must be considered to be as important as the knowledge and expertise of the consultant(s).'<sup>7</sup>

The FATSIL Guide goes on to assert:

- Communities want control over the aims and outcomes of language projects
- An overwhelming concern of Indigenous communities is that they are often unable to control the access to the vast amount of existing materials
- Communities wish to be in a position where they are aware of and consulted about who uses materials<sup>8</sup>

In addition:

'Men's and women's business are very important and sensitive issues within Indigenous culture. This information may only be talked about, negotiated and consulted on by either men or women. It should also be recorded or stored in a way that only men or only women have access as appropriate.'<sup>9</sup>

In relation to statewide resources, acknowledging communal ownership by the Koorie community across Victoria is strongly recommended, as well as endorsement by VAEAI as the sole recognised and authorised statewide community representative body for Koorie education and training.

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.fpcc.ca/files/PDF/guide-to-community-protocols-for-indigenous-language-projects.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> FATSIL, Guide to Community Protocols for Indigenous Language Projects 2004, page 9

<sup>8</sup> FATSIL, Guide to Community Protocols for Indigenous Language Projects 2004, page 15

<sup>9</sup> FATSIL, Guide to Community Protocols for Indigenous Language Projects 2004, page 15

VAEAI endorses these protocols for working with Koorie communities, and believes that they equally apply to working with Koorie communities in education and early childhood settings, in the development and delivery of curriculum content.

*These reasons are why it is important for the education system, schools in particular, to seek permission from their local Koorie community, be sensitive to the concerns of that community and be careful in respecting and accurately acknowledging ownership of information and resources by local communities and their members.*

## PROTOCOLS FOR USING KOORIE-DEVELOPED EDUCATION RESOURCES

**Getting permission is essential.** It is not appropriate to do work on any Koorie project without the consent of the community involved or Koorie people connected to the issues, as they own the knowledge and history, and 'it is their right to pass it on if they wish. There may be specific reasons why information may not be passed on to you or why permission may not be given. For example, it could be sacred or taboo, related to death customs or be specifically women's or men's business.'<sup>10</sup>

**Understanding the place of and respecting Elders is essential.** Leaders do not have to reach an elderly age to be respected as an Elder (though usually they are senior in age). An Elder is a respected and trusted leader in a Koorie community, who is seen as the holder of particular knowledge, and has the permission and authority to give advice and pass on this knowledge. "Elders have the authority to determine appropriate use of their culture outside of the Indigenous community."<sup>11</sup>

*Any education materials produced must:*

- be developed directly by or in partnership with Koorie community representatives - at the local level this work must be in consultation with LAECGs
- publically recognise the cultural and intellectual property rights of the community from which the knowledge and information has been provided.

A formal written agreement between an LAECG or Koorie person who has provided any new curriculum content or resource and the school provides appropriate clarity of information on the source of the resource and its ownership by the local community, as well as the conditions for its use.

Such written agreements provide communities with the confidence to continue to develop and provide resources to the education system, as they ensure communities know that:

- they can control the content and use of works published about their community and its history and traditions
- they are empowered and respected as owners of the knowledge, and
- they can formally guide its use in schools.

<sup>10</sup> Yarra Ranges Council, Practical Indigenous Protocols, page 7

<sup>11</sup> Yarra Ranges Council, Practical Indigenous Protocols, page 7

# Resources

## KOORIE EDUCATION CALENDAR

The VAEAI Koorie Education Calendar has been developed to assist educators and learners in focusing on, and locating information about Victorian Koorie cultures, histories and perspectives. Framed around significant dates and events throughout the calendar year, the VAEAI Koorie Education Calendar draws the learner to Victorian Koorie voices, stories, achievements, leadership and connections, and suggests a range of activities and resources around these dates.

<https://www.vaeai.org.au/koorie-education-resources/>

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

VAEAI encourages all schools wanting to work collaboratively with their local Koorie Community to create a culture of high expectations for Koorie students, to enter into a School-Community Partnership Agreement. You can read more about the KPaCE program and how to develop a School-Community Partnership Agreement in The Koorie Parent and Community Engagement Model (2013), available at

<https://www.vaeai.org.au/?download=7524>

## START-UP GUIDE FOR BOTH SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

The VCAA has provided a start-up guide for schools or community members wanting to get involved in reclaiming and reviving Victorian Aboriginal Languages and cultures, through starting up start-up a school-based language program.

<http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/pages/alcu/about.aspx?Redirect=1>

## VICTORIAN KOORIE LANGUAGES IN SCHOOLS PROGRAM

These links provide more information about the Aboriginal Languages pilot trials that have been developed with the support of VAEAI, LAECGs, VACL, Traditional Owners, the local Koorie community, DET and the VCAA. Initially three Victorian schools took part in the pilot program: Thornbury Primary School in Melbourne, Heywood & Districts Secondary College in Victoria's south-west region, and Swan Hill Primary School on the edge of the Murray River. Since then, more schools have taken on teaching Koorie language and culture programs, including Bright P-12 College, Mildura Primary School, Robinvale P-12 College, Gowrie St Primary School, Melton West Primary School, Bruthen Primary School and others. For more details see VAEAI's support and programs page.

<http://www.vaeai.org.au/support/>

## KOORIE ENGLISH AND CODE SWITCHING

This report from VAEAI focuses on the use of Koorie English and code switching in schools.

Code-switching refers to a person's ability to move back and forth between two languages or dialects depending on who they are speaking to and in what context. Code-switching is also a skill that people of multi-cultural and bi-lingual backgrounds have long recognised as necessary for success within mainstream education and employment. Koorie students often attain code-switching skills naturally, as they switch from speaking Koorie English in the home and amongst family and peers, to Standard Australian English (SAE) in the classroom and

more formal environments.

<http://www.vaeai.org.au/?ddownload=5951>

#### VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL HONOUR ROLL.

Every year, the Victorian Indigenous Honour Roll formally acknowledges and celebrates the wide-ranging achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians, past and present.

As the Honour Roll builds over time, all people have the opportunity to learn about the contributions and achievements of both historical and contemporary Aboriginal Victorians in the areas of community leadership, human and social rights, activism, sports, music and more. Teachers and students can read the stories of the Victorian Indigenous Honour Roll Inductees through the link below.

<http://www.vic.gov.au/news/victorian-aboriginal-honour-roll.html>

See more curriculum and classroom resources on the VAEAI website

<http://www.vaeai.org.au>



# The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI)

*VAEAI was established in 1976 as an unincorporated body named the Victorian Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (VAECG). The success of the VAECG led to the organisation's incorporation and a name change to the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated in 1985.*

*VAEAI supports the provision of education and training that reinforces our community's cultural identity. VAEAI also works to increase the awareness of the wider community about Koorie culture and aspirations in education and training. VAEAI represents the Koorie community in relation to education policy and strategy development at the local, state and national levels by liaising with governments, departmental offices and education and training providers. VAEAI works with government at the State and Federal levels by providing research and policy advice, developing strategies, providing community advocacy and dissemination of information through the community regarding education opportunities.*

*In Victoria the state level policy for Koorie education is Yalca (2001). The Yalca policy was developed in partnership between VAEAI and the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET). Yalca clearly establishes that research, policy and programs for Koorie education in Victoria will be conducted in partnership with the Koorie community through VAEAI.*

*There are strategies in place that define the activities that VAEAI is working on with government agencies. For more information visit VAEAI's website. [www.vaesai.org.au](http://www.vaesai.org.au)*





*VAEAI  
acknowledges that  
the land we do  
business on  
is Aboriginal Land.*

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