Closing the Gap —
A Kimberley Partnership Approach
2009 & beyond

Our Vision

Aboriginal people in the Kimberley will enjoy the full range of opportunities for social and economic growth, prosperity and wellbeing.

COAG targets

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has adopted targets to close the gap. Although there is much more to be done in the Kimberley, we also share and seek to meet or better the following COAG targets:

- Close the life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians within a generation;
- Halve the mortality gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and other children under age 5 within a decade;
- Halve the gap in literacy and numeracy achievement between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students within a decade;
- Halve the gap in employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within a decade;
- At least halve the gap in attainment for Year 12 schooling (or equivalent level) by 2020; and
- Provide all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander four year olds in remote communities with access to a quality preschool program within five years.

Partnership Principles

- We commit to a partnership that meets Kimberley challenges, needs and aspirations and closes and eliminates the gaps in schooling and education, work readiness, training, employment, and economic development.
- We acknowledge Aboriginal people's rights and commit to the development and coordination of quality innovative and sustainable initiatives, programs, and services.
- We commit to a partnership approach which results in Aboriginal people moving beyond welfare dependency.
- We commit to aligning National and State priorities and resourcing with Kimberley regional priorities.

- We acknowledge Aboriginal people's connection to their land, pride in their culture, languages, family and kinship and commit to strengthening their physical, spiritual, cultural, emotional, economic, social well being.
- We commit to building confidence and self esteem to motivate Aboriginal people to gain and retain employment
- We commit to maintaining an innovative improvement focus to meet additional challenges in leadership, housing, health services and mobility to influence positive change, inform best practice and add value for money.
- We embrace a shared responsibility and commit to high standards of integrity, transparency, performance and accountability.

Our Priorities

Preparation for Schooling – Early Childhood

- Expand the range, quality and coverage of services for children in the 0 to 4 age group.
- Increase participation of parents and families to integrate Aboriginal culture in the early childhood education systems and processes.
- Maintain coordination and linkages between pre-schools, children's, health and family services to maximise early participation, support and mentoring of 'at risk' parents and children.
- Sustain quality, community-based early childhood facilities, programs and resources.

Schooling

- Sustain engagement with schooling, to increase school attendance and retention rates across all ages and years of schooling through innovative programs and initiatives.
- Meet or exceed national and State literacy and numeracy standards through the delivery of innovative Kimberley specific programs and initiatives.
- Maintain excellence in schools through the recruitment and retention of quality leaders, teachers and support staff.
- Sustain regional capacity, school community partnerships and develop opportunities to enhance local decision making and governance.
- Sustain the full range of schooling options, infrastructure and residential facilities to ensure all primary and secondary students in the Kimberley have access to quality schooling.

Work Readiness, Training and Employment – In Schools

- Sustain access, choice and links to quality life skills, work readiness, education, careers information and employment and training (including mentoring for employment).
- Build and sustain quality employer and industry linkages and engagement strategies with schools.
- Actively promote the involvement of parents, families and community in the development of the child and school systems to increase school attendance, participation and education outcomes.

Work Readiness, Training and Employment

- Increase the availability and quality of job and training opportunities for Aboriginal people.
- Network, coordinate and share service knowledge to build best practice and maintain quality, delivery, coordination, case management, motivational training and mentoring into sustainable employment.
- Integrate culturally appropriate assessments of literacy and numeracy for work readiness, training and employment programs and initiatives.
- Partner with and utilise community, elders, education, career and employment specialists in the provision of quality mentoring programs and services.

Economic Development and Participation

- Increase the availability and quality of enterprise and social enterprise opportunities for Aboriginal people.
- Maximise, support and encourage Aboriginal participation and leverage in business/joint ventures.
- Increase economic development and leverage opportunities from new and expanded industry, improvements in new government infrastructure and servicing in major centres.
- Improve the linkages, networking and information sharing to build best practice across the region in the areas of industry strategy, economic development, enterprise and social enterprise.

Our Priorities

Our Performance Measures

- Quality, range and availability of services and participation and retention rates of 0-4 age group.
- Number and quality of systems, processes and programs and extent of parent and family participation.
- Quality of service delivery improvements delivered for at risk parents and children.
- Number of facilities and availability of resources and programs.

- Increases in school attendance, engagement and retention rates across all ages and years of schooling.
- National and State standards that are met or exceeded.
- Retention rates and quality of leaders, teachers and support staff.
- Number of communities that demonstrate successful localised decision making and governance practices.
- Range of schooling options and quality of infrastructure and residential facilities available.

- Number, access and quality outcomes delivered.
- Number, quality and success of employer and industry group linkages and engagement strategies.
- Increased parent involvement and extent to which school attendance, participation and education improve.
- Number of students and families engaging or re-engaging in education.

- Number and quality of job and training opportunities available.
- Number of Aboriginal people successfully case managed and mentored into employment.
- Culturally appropriate measures integrated into all work readiness and training programs.
- Participation rates of community, elders, education, career and employment specialists.

- Number, quality and viability of Aboriginal commercial enterprise, social enterprise opportunities available.
- Number of Aboriginal people participating in business/joint ventures.
- Number of economic development opportunities generated through coordinated cross sector approaches .
- Number of best practice examples and quality of improvement in industry strategy, economic development, enterprise and social enterprise.

Our Performance Measures