



**Sarah Mitchell**

Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning

**Don Harwin**

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Thursday, 14 October 2021

### **CONNECTION TO CULTURE LIFTS ABORIGINAL STUDENTS' HSC SUCCESS**

A new report has identified the successful ways schools are using cultural activities to drive improvements in Aboriginal high school completions.

The in-depth study, published by the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, analysed the data of almost 40,000 secondary students across the state, including 3,686 who were Aboriginal.

Minister for Education Sarah Mitchell said the findings showed that connection to culture, language and heritage was a key driver behind Aboriginal students' successful HSC attainment.

"We are seeing that when Aboriginal students are supported to maintain a strong connection to culture during their schooling years, the more likely they are to complete Year 12," Ms Mitchell said.

"Cultural recognition was identified as a unique driver behind students' aspirations. Aboriginal students in Years 7 to 9 who 'feel good about their culture' while at school were much more likely to aspire to complete their HSC.

"It's important for all schools everywhere to recognise and celebrate the culture, history and customs of all students and communities in order to foster classroom environments where students feel supported to achieve great things."

The report also studied more than 8,000 primary school students to explore different approaches which successfully supported Aboriginal students.

For older Aboriginal students, cultural recognition at school can be a unique catalyst for success.

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Don Harwin said that supporting Aboriginal students' cultural identity at school was integral to their HSC success.

"We know that cultural recognition lifts students' inclusion and engagement at school and this learning environment assists Aboriginal students to attain their HSC," Mr Harwin said.

"The real recognition of Aboriginal identity builds relationships and rapport with educators and opens the door for students to learn and thrive in their studies. This will have long term impacts for students and their pathway in the future."

**MEDIA: Eliza Cabassi | Minister Mitchell | 0428 260 469  
Duncan McNab | Minister Harwin | 0424 282 091**