



MOUNT ELIZA
SECONDARY COLLEGE

RESPONSE TO MARRUNG PLAN

Note: Throughout this document the term Koorie is used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of our school community.

Mount Eliza Secondary embraces the vision of the [Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan](#) and celebrates the culture, knowledge and experiences of First Nations Peoples. We are committed to creating and maintaining a school environment that empowers Koorie students to feel valued, respected and culturally strong.

Our school has approaches in place to ENCOURAGE our community to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. These approaches are outlined below followed by goals the school is still working towards.

People Responsibilities and Roles

Danielle Vaughan School Principal

Brian Walker KESO of our region

Irene Treadwell First Nations' Advocate

Matthew Anderson Marrung Plan Advocate

Training and professional development of staff

Measures in place

To ensure our staff have the opportunity to be equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to create and maintain a positive and inclusive school environment:

- Staff participate in [Community Understanding and Safety Training \(CUST\)](#) training
- Express zero tolerance of racism in our statement of commitment to child safety included in our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and other documents.
- Deliver training and professional development to equip teaching staff to deliver Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives within the classroom curriculum. PD could include online webinars, run by Narragunnawali (Narragunnawali - Webinars) or staff attending the Bundjil Nest Conference, an annual two-day conference in Balnarring and internal PD opportunities, especially for new staff, run by First Nations and Marrung Plan Advocate.
- Ensure training and professional development offered equips staff with an understanding and appreciation of the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Koorie children and students.

Goals we are working towards

- For staff involved in the Marrung Plan to visit and learn from another school such as Elizabeth Murdoch College.
- Support teachers to work in their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to map and develop teaching and learning activities within the Victorian Curriculum priorities to enable staff to build their confidence with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content and to recognise opportunities to draw upon Aboriginal pedagogies and practices within their classrooms.
- Further encourage Acknowledgement of Country

At Mount Eliza Secondary College we acknowledge that our learning occurs on the lands of the Bunurong People, and we wish to acknowledge them as the traditional owners.

We respect their deep connection to this land and waterways which have been and continue to be nurtured by their culture and customs.

We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and any other Aboriginal People of other communities who may be with us, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture and hopes of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across the nation.

Student Leadership

Measures in place

Mount Eliza Secondary College supports a student lead voice by offering 4 First Nations ambassador leadership roles within the student leadership framework.

- The position was offered for the first time in 2024 with one student successfully applying for the position.
- To give First Nation ambassador as much responsibility and space to share and grow their culture as they feel comfortable with.
- Read a personal acknowledgment of Country or support others to read theirs during assemblies.
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Goals we are working towards

- RAP
- Create opportunities for First Nations ambassador to liaise with First Nations Advocate and Koorie students and their allies/friends and create a calendar of events for the year.
- For students to be involved in KELIS to support the development Indigenous student leadership.

Curriculum and Learning

Measures in place

Mount Eliza Secondary College supports the development of high expectations and individualised learning for Koorie students and creates a learning environment for all students that acknowledges, respects and values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities. This includes:

- Implementing the Department of Education and Training's [Koorie Education Policy](#)
- Ensuring that all Koorie students have IEPs developed in partnership with students, families and KESOs.
- SSG meetings every term
- Liaise closely with First Nations' families, taking on board their concerns and thoughts and acting on them.

Goals we are working towards

- Development of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
- Weave the First Nations' perspective into the Curriculum, utilizing resources such as the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc (VAEAI)

Assemblies and other school events and activities

Measures in place

We ensure our school events and activities acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture by:

- Acknowledging the Country and Traditional Owners of the land on which our school is located, the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung people at the start of every school assembly and meeting
- Encouraging all of our staff or students to deliver Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of each week in session 1.
- Arranging Welcome to Country by local Elders through the Bunurong Land Council at major school events such as the beginning of the year or whole school assembly.
- Arranging incursions and excursions and recognising key events and anniversaries that celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture such as NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation week.
- Invite our First Nations' students to any organised excursion, incursions or event that offers new connections with First Nations people, groups and culture, for example the annual Koorie Youth Summit at Willum Warrain.
- Camp - Central Australia: to ensure it is run in a culturally relevant manner and students prepared with appropriate information sessions pertaining to indigenous cultural perspectives of the nations they visit.

Goals we are working towards

- For our KESO, Brian, to provide professional development opportunities during staff meetings pertaining to a range of matters within the Marrung plan.

Built and digital environment

Measures in place

We ensure our built environment and website demonstrates an appreciation and acknowledgment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through:

- Flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on school grounds.
- Constructing a Bush tucker garden for use by the school community. Choose a Thinking stone as the centre piece together with the Koorie students.
- Four large panels, created by and depicting the totems and dreamings of Koorie students from about 8 years ago. They are displayed at reception and outdoors.

Goals we are working towards

- A grant to support an Indigenous artist to add artwork to the existing bush tucker garden space.
- Displaying plaques/signs outside our main entrance and around the school grounds that Acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners.
- Including an Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners on our website home page

Family and community perspectives and feedback

Measures in place

- Celebrate the local Aboriginal community and promote special events of First Nations' People in communications with our school community. Share information through school newsletters, Facebook posts and school assemblies
- Working with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) for advice on how we can create a culturally inclusive learning environment and to build our capacity to provide support for individual Koorie students attending our school
- We actively seek participation and feedback from Koorie students, families and Community by: Acknowledging the existing knowledge of Koorie students and their families and seeking their feedback on decisions that affect them, and on how well we are meeting their needs, through initial enrolment meetings, Student Support Groups (SSG's), through the development of Individual Education Plans (IEP's). Partnering with Willum Warrain Aboriginal Association to seek feedback and advice on existing and new actions we can take to support the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal students and children in our community.

- We recognise that our school’s practices must be regularly reviewed and updated in partnership with our families and local communities. We encourage you to contact info@mesc.vic.edu.au with any feedback, concerns or suggestions.

Goals we are working towards

- To recognise the risks of cultural overload for Indigenous students and members of the school community, to ensure that no individuals feel overwhelmed and roles and responsibilities are evenly shared. Indigenous students should not be forced to bear any cultural load.
- “I think where I get frustrated is when we as Aboriginal people are asked to always be the teachers (Cultural Load). I have learnt to say no at work as it can become tiring, and this is why I often say no for my son as it's an extra load on him, and the other Indigenous students which they shouldn't have to bear. They know they are Aboriginal and are connected in ways that they want to be connected. I'm just really mindful that we don't use them and in my case Ben to teach and train others when they are children, and just want to be like other kids.”
[Taken from an email from a First Nation parent]

Review and approval

Plan last reviewed –

School Community – School Newsletter – September 2022

Approved by

Next review date May 2026

Principal – Danni Vaughan

 July 2024

Student –

Adelaide Grigor – July 2024



Staff – Newsletter July 19, 2024



School Council – July 2024