



ABORIGINAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

# PERSONALISED LEARNING PATHWAYS GUIDELINES



# **NSW Department of Education**

## **Personalised Learning Pathways (PLPs) for Aboriginal students**

### **Guidelines**

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## **1. Introduction and context**

The aim of these guidelines is to provide schools with information to support the effective development and implementation of Personalised Learning Pathways (PLPs) for Aboriginal students.

*Personalised Learning Plans* are now called *Personalised Learning Pathways*. The change in name does not alter their intent or the processes involved in ensuring their effective development and implementation.

PLPs are an effective tool for increasing Aboriginal student engagement. They have the potential to support improved learning outcomes and educational aspirations when they are developed in genuine partnership with Aboriginal students, their parents or carers and teachers.

They can be customised by each school and Aboriginal community to meet local needs and contexts.

## **2. Personalised Learning Pathways for Aboriginal students**

### **What are Personalised Learning Pathways?**

Personalised Learning Pathways are an active process. They are developed in a consultation process between the student, parents/carers and teachers, to identify, organise and apply personal approaches to learning and engagement.

Personalised Learning Pathways can have short term or long term goals. Short term goals can be specific stepping stones to reach long term goals.

### **Who are they for?**

It is recommended that all Aboriginal students have a PLP that is tailored to the student and is regularly reviewed and updated.

There is no state wide Personalised Learning Pathway template. It is recommended that schools and community develop a PLP template to suit their local needs.

## What are the key features of PLPs?

An effective PLP should:

- engage students in discussing their aspirational goals
- contain specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound (SMART) goals that support students to realise their goals and life-long aspirations
- record student's academic goals and aspirations in a context that takes into account the student's spiritual, emotional, social and physical health and wellbeing
- be developed in partnership with parents/carers, with support from Aboriginal staff and other specialist school staff and agencies if relevant
- articulate learning pathways required to pursue the student's identified goals
- be easily accessible in hard copy or online to students, families and staff
- be owned by the student, and engages the student voice in the development, monitoring and review processes.
- Include a literacy and numeracy component for all students who are at risk of falling behind. This should be negotiated with the student, parent/carer and teacher.

To enable teachers to provide tailored support for each student's learning, it is important that PLPs be developed for all Aboriginal students, including those who are gifted and talented. PLPs for gifted and talented students should record the implementation of appropriate educational strategies and differentiated curricula needed to support exceptional learners to fulfil their potential.

PLPs will change as the student moves from learning stage to learning stage. It is expected that the PLPs developed in Stage 3 will be used to support student transition into Year 7.

### **Mandatory literacy and numeracy component for Aboriginal students at risk of falling behind**

In 2012, the NSW Audit Office conducted an audit dealing with the literacy achievement of Aboriginal students in NSW Public Schools. The Auditor-General's Audit Report recommended the inclusion of a literacy component in the PLPs of all Aboriginal students at risk of falling behind.

For the purposes of these guidelines, Aboriginal students at risk of falling behind are defined as students who are:

- in relation to Literacy:
  - at or below the national minimum standards in NAPLAN reading and writing tests, **or**
  - below their stage cluster level in the NSW K-10 Literacy Continuum and/or below stage outcome level in the NSW K-10 English syllabus
  - receiving Learning Assistance funding (formerly NAPLAN)
- in relation to Numeracy:
  - at or below the national minimum standard in NAPLAN numeracy tests **or**
  - below their stage cluster level in the NSW K-10 Numeracy Continuum and/or below stage outcome level in the NSW K-10 Maths syllabus
  - receiving Learning Assistance funding (formerly NAPLAN)

### **3. Personalised Learning Pathways implementation process**

#### **Engaging Aboriginal parents and carers**

The PLP document is used by schools to ensure Aboriginal students and their parents/carers are actively engaged in meaningful planning and decision-making in education. PLP conversations are of great importance as they identify and strengthen shared understandings of goals, expectations and responsibilities. These conversations need to be respectful and genuine.

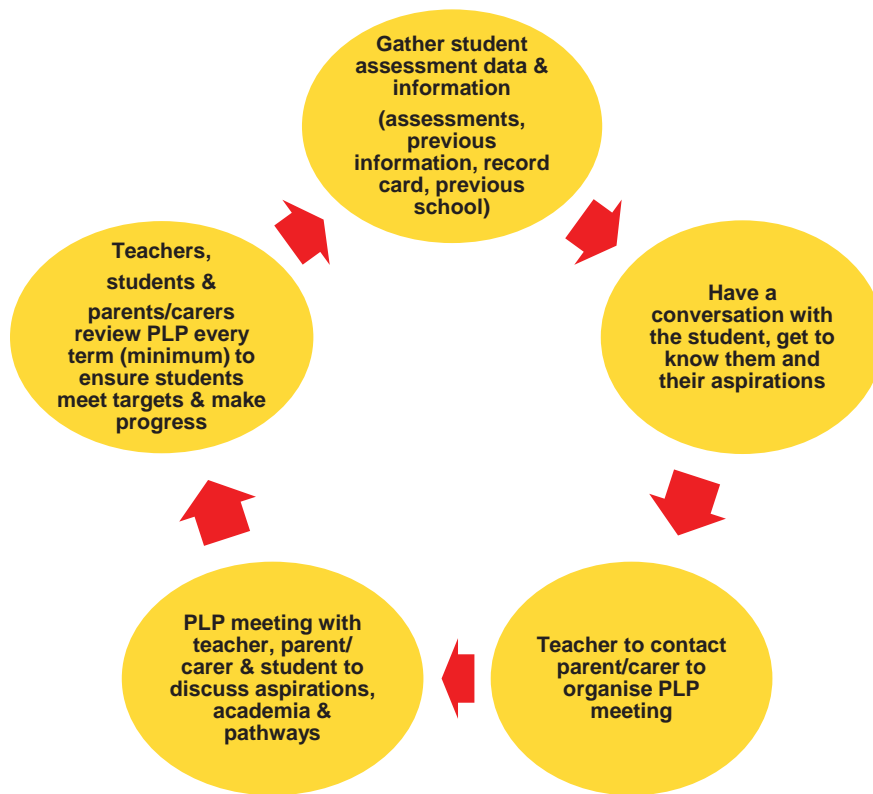
Confidentiality and privacy are major issues within Aboriginal communities. Parents and carers need to understand *why* the gathering of specific information is important and *how* the information will be used throughout the PLP process.

Aspirational goals and the mapping of learning pathways are an important part of PLPs. For Aboriginal students to achieve their aspirational goals, it is critical that their families are actively engaged in PLP processes.

#### **Ongoing monitoring and review of PLPs**

It is recommended that PLPs be revisited at least once a semester. This could be done in conjunction with the school's routine reporting procedures.

Formal meetings that focus on the aspirational goals of the student should be held once a semester.



There are multiple entrance points into the PLP monitoring and review process:

- An effective PLP is owned by the student. Engaging students in the monitoring and review process promotes active learning and personal empowerment.
- Through the continuous assessment process, teachers and specialist support staff may refer to the PLP document throughout the year and make annotations outlining evidence of goals achieved. This evidence can be discussed with the student and family during informal and formal conversations.

For further information and support please contact the Aboriginal Education Advisor in your area.