



MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW AECG Inc. Welcomes Historic Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap

The NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. (NSW AECG Inc) has welcomed the signing of an historic Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap between the Commonwealth Government, State and Territory Governments and the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Bodies.

The Coalition of Peaks is made up of around forty Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations that have come together to negotiate with governments and be signatories to the Partnership Agreement.

This Agreement means that for the first time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, through their peak body representatives, will share decision making with governments on Closing the Gap.

“We believe that shared decision making between governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled representatives in the design, implementation and monitoring of Closing the Gap is essential to closing the gap,” said Cindy Berwick, President of the NSW AECG.

The NSW AECG, along with other Peak Organisations, has been calling for a greater role with governments on efforts to close the unacceptable gaps in life outcomes within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Cindy Berwick also stated that *“Education is fundamental to enabling life choices for our people and communities. It also has the capacity to build a nation that promotes respect and tolerance of First Nation people. We look forward to collaborating and working in genuine partnership”*

The Partnership Agreement sets out how governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peaks bodies will work together to agree a refreshed national agreement on Closing the Gap, including any new Closing the Gap targets and implementation and monitoring arrangements.

The Partnership Agreement also marks the establishment of a new, Joint Council on Closing the Gap that will be co-chaired by a Minister and a representative of the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Bodies.

“There is much work to be done and we look forward to a constructive partnership with the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments to improve the quality of live for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples,” said NSW AECG President Cindy Berwick.

The Partnership Agreement can be accessed at
<https://www.naccho.org.au/programmes/coalition-of-peaks/>

MEDIA CONTACT: For more information contact Joe Cavanagh – NSW AECG Policy Officer on 0411 951 456 or joseph.cavanagh@aecg.nsw.edu.au