



**Sarah Mitchell**  
Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning

**Don Harwin**  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Wednesday, 1 September 2021

### **CELEBRATING INDIGENOUS LITERACY DAY IN NSW**

Stronger educational outcomes are being celebrated across NSW on Indigenous Literacy Day, with schools participating in this year's theme - Celebrating Stories and Language.

The annual celebration will feature Aboriginal languages, stories and culture as a reminder of the importance of a connection to language, heritage and literacy for Aboriginal communities.

Minister for Education Sarah Mitchell said the NSW Government was committed to lifting Aboriginal educational outcomes and helping students to achieve their full potential through a number of programs focused on language and culture.

"We know that when Aboriginal students are connected to their language and culture and feel supported by their community, their educational outcomes improve," Ms Mitchell said.

"That's why the NSW Government continues to roll out a number of Aboriginal initiatives, such as the Connected Communities Strategy, Ninganah No More and the Aboriginal Early Childhood Education strategy.

"These programs are centred around a stronger connection to country, community, language and culture, and all share the same objective: to ensure every Aboriginal child in NSW has access to a top quality education and early childhood education."

That stronger connection has helped lift results in reading for many Year 3 Aboriginal students over the last decade, with 25.3 per cent placed in the top two NAPLAN bands in 2019.

Ms Mitchell added that a forthcoming study by the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation has found that Aboriginal students in Year 10 who "feel good about their culture" while at school are around 22 per cent more likely to aspire to get their HSC.

"Recent studies reiterate that cultural recognition is a critical driver in Aboriginal student aspiration at school, and increases the likelihood that their education journey will be enriched."

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Don Harwin said that in celebrating Indigenous Literacy Day, NSW is building on its history as Australia's first state to introduce legislation to protect Aboriginal languages.

"Today is a day to recognise the diversity of Aboriginal languages and the important role their revival and maintenance plays in keeping culture strong," Mr Harwin said.

“This is reflected in a number of the NSW Government’s commitments under the National Agreement for Closing the Gap, which includes a target for sustained increase in number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken by 2031.

“I encourage people to use today to engage with Aboriginal languages, such as enjoying and sharing the work of Aboriginal storytellers or learning more about the meaning of traditional Aboriginal names of local landmarks.”

**MEDIA: Taylor Denny | Minister Mitchell | 0439 760 111**

**Duncan McNab | Minister Harwin | 0424 282 091**