

Cultural Immersion Program (CIP)

Aim

To ensure that school leaders and teachers have the cultural understandings to significantly improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Description

The Cultural Immersion Program (CIP) was designed in late 2008 and is targeted at whole school staff. The program was designed and is delivered by the Aboriginal Education K-12 Team.

Based on the understanding that *all cultures need order to survive*, the CIP is an interactive experience that opens a window into what is known as *Aboriginal order*. This is followed by looking at the impact on that order by outside influences and the subsequent effect that has flowed through to future generations. The effects that are visible today, across all aspects of the Aboriginal experience in Australia, including education, are explored. Participants engage in processes that are both reflective (Looking Back) and visionary (Looking Forward).

A thorough analysis of the *Aboriginal & Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014* is incorporated into the program and provides participants with a foundation for further growth. The learning provides support to the school to build Aboriginal Education within the culture of the school in sustainable ways. This helps form a solid base from which the participants can *walk the talk*, by becoming more action focussed.

The CIP also permits participants to examine themselves as citizens of Australia. Seamlessly interwoven through the fabric of the program is a portal for participants to examine the national effort with respect to developing a culture of acceptance for all citizens at different levels (system, school, community, individual). It invites participants to answer their own questions in relation to Reconciliation.

The CIP is an evolutionary program and has the flexibility to accommodate other fields (including outside agencies such as health and the private sector) where understanding of the Aboriginal experience is an imperative.

The course is a means for *growing enriched cultural knowledge* in Catholic schools. The course guides schools on ways of making the whole school environment more inclusive.

Outcomes

Development of a school Aboriginal Education Plan / Strategy. This process will 'anchor' the school's commitment to Aboriginal Education. In view of making the school more inclusive of Aboriginal students and families, the strategy comprises goals/targets that are particular to the school community, for example pedagogy, parent-school partnerships, enrolments, student personalised learning plans, attendance and anti-racism policies.

For further information contact:

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