



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Multicultural Plan 2021-2025



Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and respect the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which our students live and are educated throughout Western Australia.

We acknowledge and understand that Elders, parents, families and communities are the first educators of their children and we recognise and value the cultures and strengths that Aboriginal children bring to the classroom. Aboriginal people have a long tradition of teaching and learning through sharing their connections with country, community, language and culture, and through their oral histories, stories and lived experiences that are passed from generation to generation.

We recognise and value the learning that Aboriginal children bring with them from their homes and communities into the classroom.

The word Aboriginal is taken to mean Aboriginal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and Indigenous. When referring to individuals, use the term Aboriginal person.

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Contents

Message from the Director General	2
Our diverse community	3
Purpose	4
Related policies, plans and documents	5
Monitoring and Reporting	5
Our Actions	7
Policy priority 1 – Harmonious and inclusive communities	7
Policy priority 2 – Culturally responsive policies, programs and services	8
Policy priority 3 – Economic, social, cultural, civic and political participation	11
Definitions	12

Message from the Director General

The Western Australian public school system is a major contributor to our State's prosperity and growth.

More importantly, through its key focus on inclusion, equity and excellence, public schools foster wellbeing and participation of all students which is reflected through families in public school communities.

We have developed our Multicultural Plan 2021–2025 in response to the State Government's Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework priorities of:

- Harmonious and inclusive communities
- Culturally responsive policies, programs and services
- Economic, social, cultural, civic and political participation

The Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework recognises the State's growing diversity, with approximately 32 per cent of people born overseas.

Our own Multicultural Plan 2021–2025 is primarily focused on Western Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The Department acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as the original and First People of Australia, have a unique place in society. This includes the special relationship Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with land, sea, sky and waterways, their unique history and cultural diversity, and their ways of being, knowing, thinking and doing.¹

While some of the elements of the Multicultural Plan 2021–2025 apply to Aboriginal people and people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, it is still essential there is a distinct and dedicated focus on Aboriginal people in the development and implementation of the Department's policies, programs and services. All staff are expected to use the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework so that their practices are culturally responsive to the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal students, their parents, families and communities.

Our Multicultural Plan 2021–2025 supports the Department's Every student, every classroom, every day: strategic directions for public schools 2020–2024. We are also committed to supporting the capacity and contribution of people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds. The Multicultural Plan 2021–2025 describes how we can build on the strong position already established by our commitment to provide an environment which is inclusive, fair and equitable for all students, staff and their school communities.

We will maintain the momentum for improvement in our current policies, programs and processes by taking further action to strengthen support for our English as an Additional Language and/or Dialect (EALD) students, families migrating through difficult circumstances, staff and school community members from CaLD backgrounds.

We will continue to work to ensure all elements of our Multicultural Plan 2021–2025 are implemented. We are committed to ensuring that future decision-making about roles, structures and supports continues to create meaningful pathways to support EALD students, staff and school community members from CaLD backgrounds.



Lisa Rodgers
Director General



Our diverse community

Western Australia has a diverse community which has contributed to the State’s economic growth and has enriched our society as a whole (from the State Government’s Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework).

Western Australia has the largest proportion of population born overseas (32.2 per cent) compared to the national average (26.3 per cent).

The Framework informs the definition of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) as generally applying to groups and individuals who differ according to religion, language and ethnicity and whose ancestry is other than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Anglo Saxon or Anglo Celtic.

Our staff

The Department’s work and learning environments are becoming more multicultural.

In June 2020, 9.4 per cent (4382 employees) of the Department’s employees shared their diversity and identified as CaLD. Diversity disclosure is not mandatory. CaLD employees are defined as those born in identified countries which are not mainly English speaking.



Employees identifying as CaLD

9.4%

The top five countries of birth of CaLD employees are:

- India**
- Philippines**
- Malaysia**
- Singapore**
- Zimbabwe**

The top five languages spoken are:

- Mandarin**
- Italian**
- Vietnamese**
- Cantonese**
- Tagalog**

Our students

One in nine students in public schools has English as an Additional Language and/or Dialect (as identified by schools).



Purpose

The Multicultural Plan 2021-2025 (the Plan) demonstrates our commitment to and accountability in meeting the State Government and the community's expectations in providing an inclusive, fair and equitable environment for all students, staff and wider school communities. The Plan was developed in alignment with our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2021-2025.

As outlined in the Department's Strategic Directions, Western Australian public schools have a focus in partnering with families, communities and agencies to support the educational engagement of every student. The purpose of the Plan is to outline the key areas of action to be delivered by Central Services to assist schools to support intercultural understanding and cultural responsiveness. The Plan complements a number of existing policies and procedures.

This Plan has been developed in consultation with schools and contributions from business areas across the Department. We also provide staff, facilities and resources to the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) and the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA). The services and programs of these agencies form part of the Department's Plan.

The Plan is a living document and will evolve through our collection and response of ongoing feedback.



Related policies, plans and documents

The Multicultural Plan 2021-2025 supports the Department's current policies, programs and initiatives that focus on our culturally diverse schools and their communities.

The actions outlined in our Multicultural Plan 2021-2025, together with a range of Department policies and strategies, collectively contribute to wellbeing, social inclusion and community harmony in our schools and their school communities.

Listed below are links to relevant policies and legislation.

Australian Government

[Multicultural Access and Equity Policy Guide 2018](#)

[Alice Springs \(Mparntwe\) Education Declaration \(2019\)](#)

[Multicultural Australia: Australia's multicultural statement \(2017\)](#)

[Racial Discrimination Act \(1975\)](#)

[Racial Hatred Act \(1995\)](#)

State Government

[Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework](#)

[The Policy Framework for Substantive Equality](#)

[WA Charter of Multiculturalism](#)

[Equal Opportunity Act 1984](#)

Department of Education WA

[Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2021-2025](#)

[Equal Opportunity, Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#)

[Substantive Equality Guidelines \(2016\)](#)

[Equity and Inclusion Charter](#)

[Annual Focus statements](#)

[Building on strength: Future directions for the Western Australian public school system](#)

[Every student, every classroom, every day: strategic directions for public schools 2020-2024](#)

[Western Australian Public School Leadership Strategy 2018-2021](#)

[Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework](#)

[Code of Conduct](#)

Other

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

Monitoring and Reporting

Where relevant, progress against the Multicultural Plan 2021-2025 will be monitored through regular reporting, such as the:

- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Report (annual); and
- Workforce Quarterly Report

Progress against the Plan will also be reported annually to the Department's Corporate Executive.





Our Actions

Policy priority 1 – Harmonious and inclusive communities

Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework strategies:

- Promote the benefits of cultural and linguistic diversity and celebrate the achievements of people from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Address racism and discrimination at both an individual and institutional/systemic level, including implementing the Policy Framework for Substantive Equality.
- Develop workplace cultures that are welcoming and inclusive of all Western Australians.
- Initiate and support events and projects that build mutual understanding and respect between cultures.

Actions	Responsibility	Deliverables	Timeframe
Celebration			
Promote key messages of diversity to support inclusive schools and workplaces.	Communications and Media	Department-wide calendar of events launched and promoted.	31 December 2021
Promote diversity in the workplace and in schools through relevant multicultural events such as Harmony Week.	Communications and Media	Relevant multicultural events are promoted through the Department's publications, social media, relevant promotional material, communication strategies and campaigns. Publications, social media, relevant promotional material, communication strategies and campaigns are inclusive and reflect diversity.	Ongoing
Workplace culture			
Provide professional learning and support to enhance leaders' capability to foster positive workplace cultures that are equitable, inclusive and culturally safe. Provide opportunities for cultural competency training for school staff to increase understanding of cultural diversity in schools.	Workforce	Professional learning and support resources are delivered to enhance workplace culture.	Ongoing
Enhance local level support to address workplace discrimination, racism, harassment and bullying through training and support for principals, line managers and equal opportunity contact officers.	Workforce	Equal opportunity contact officer training is delivered and contact list published.	Ongoing

Performance information

- Multicultural-related events held annually.
- Number of staff who completed training related to workplace discrimination, racism, harassment and bullying.
- Number of staff who completed the Diverse WA – Cultural Competency Training.

Actions for Policy Priority 1 are linked to the Department of Education's Strategic directions for public schools 2020-2024 improvement drivers 1, 3 and 6.



Policy priority 2 – Culturally responsive policies, programs and services

Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework strategies:

- Enable culturally diverse communities to have meaningful input into policies, programs and systems through co-design and planning, co-delivery and implementation, and evaluation processes.
- Implement recruitment and selection processes that facilitate workforce diversity, and provide opportunities for the development of cultural competencies across the workforce.
- Integrate multicultural policy goals into strategic and corporate planning, procurement and review processes.
- Identify inequities in service access and outcomes for Western Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and develop strategies to address them.
- Provide language services to ensure language is not a barrier to equitable access to information and services, including complaints processes.
- Collect and analyse cultural and linguistic data to contribute to the identification of client needs, the development of policies and programs, and evaluation of outcomes.

Actions	Responsibility	Deliverables	Timeframe
Awareness and inclusivity			
Ensure relevant Department communication is in plain English.	Communications and Media	Department Style Guidelines are reviewed and updated.	Ongoing
Ensure translated versions of documents and resources on the Department’s website are made accessible and visible for public use.	Communications and Media	Translated documents are accessible and visible for public use.	31 December 2022
Consult with staff, students and school communities from CaLD backgrounds in the development and evaluation of strategic and multicultural communication plans.	Statewide Services	Register of key CaLD community organisations is developed and used for consultation purposes.	31 December 2022
Review existing procurement templates and practice guides to include requirements for engaging CaLD communities and service users in co-design and planning processes for community services.	Commercial Services	Procurement templates include requirements for engaging CaLD communities and service users including co-design and planning processes for community services.	30 June 2022
Continue to promote recruitment and employment practices and policies that are equitable, fair, transparent and culturally responsive.	Workforce	Recruitment and employment policies are reviewed and/or developed as required.	Ongoing



Actions	Responsibility	Deliverables	Timeframe
Teaching and learning			
Provide professional learning to promote a whole school approach to support learning outcomes for EALD students and strengthen school partnerships with CaLD communities.	Statewide Services	Cultural diversity and responsiveness is included in professional learning.	Ongoing
Continue to provide a teaching and learning environment that is responsive to the diverse needs of EALD students to improve learning outcomes.	Schools and Statewide Services	Teaching and learning environment is responsive to the diverse needs of EALD students.	Ongoing
Continue to support EALD students in their transitions to school, further education and employment.	Schools and Statewide Services	Student achievement data is reviewed using the EALD Progress Map.	Ongoing
Continue to provide support for newly arrived students through Intensive English Centres.	Schools	Support is provided to newly arrived EALD students through delivery of the Western Australian Curriculum in Australian Standard English.	Ongoing
Continue to enhance students' knowledge and understanding of diverse cultures.	Schools	The Western Australian Curriculum enables students to develop intercultural understanding as they learn to value their own cultures, languages and beliefs, and those of others.	Ongoing
Student health and wellbeing			
Review student data and current programs that support the engagement in learning, and the health and wellbeing of EALD students.	Statewide Services	Student data is reviewed to inform EALD student health and wellbeing program development.	Ongoing
Translating and interpreting			
Update internal/external content in relation to complaints and screening to ensure information/instructions/tools use easy-to-understand language, are interpreted, translated and meet digital accessibility standards.	Standards and Integrity, Business Improvement, Screening Unit	Complaints and screening online content and resources updated for accessibility.	31 December 2022
Teacher Registration Board of WA (TRBWA) website includes information on availability of interpreter services.	Teacher Registration Board of WA	Advice on interpreter services is updated on TRBWA website.	31 December 2022
Provide translating and interpreting services to support schools and the system to meet the needs of EALD students and CaLD communities.	Statewide Services Resources and Information Centre	Translating and interpreting data is analysed to inform service provision.	Ongoing

Actions	Responsibility	Deliverables	Timeframe
Data collation and analysis			
Strengthen collection and monitoring of CaLD staff data to identify trends/gaps to gain more accurate staff diversity information.	Workforce	Human Resources Management Information System diversity data is monitored and reported quarterly through the Public Sector Commission Diversity Dashboard. Workforce equity and diversity metrics is reported in school workforce profiles.	31 December 2021
Encourage staff to disclose diversity information to improve accuracy of workforce diversity data.	Workforce	Percentage of staff disclosing diversity is increased.	Ongoing
Analyse and use student diversity data to inform planning and provision of relevant services and programmes in schools.	System And School Performance	EALD students' eligibility for support through relevant services and programmes in schools is identified through analysis of data.	31 December 2022
Continue to analyse achievement and attendance data for EALD students to identify gaps and areas of improvement.	System And School Performance	School performance data is reviewed.	Ongoing

Performance information

- Employment diversity targets for people from CaLD backgrounds are progressed.
- Equity index for people from CaLD backgrounds is monitored and reported.
- Number of staff who completed the Diverse WA Cultural Competency training.
- Primary and secondary school attendance rates and levels for EALD students.
- Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 NAPLAN Reading, Writing and Numeracy results (mean scores and at or above national minimum standards) for EALD students (the NAPLAN data referred to in this Plan is data for LBOTE students).
- WACE achievement rate, Median ATAR and VET achievement rate for EALD students.
- Student enrolment data at Intensive English Centres.
- Number of translation and interpreting requests completed.
- Student data provided by schools including health and wellbeing information, as and when available.

Actions for Policy Priority 2 are linked to the Department of Education's Strategic directions for public schools 2020-2024 improvement drivers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Policy priority 3 – Economic, social, cultural, civic and political participation

Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework strategies:

- Implement recruitment and career development processes that support employment and progression of staff from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Achievable equitable representation of people from culturally linguistically diverse backgrounds at all levels and in decision-making roles.
- Identify, develop and implement initiatives that encourage social, cultural, civic and political participation by members of Western Australia’s culturally and linguistically diverse community.

Actions	Responsibility	Deliverables	Timeframe
Inclusivity			
Promote and support career development of staff from CaLD backgrounds. Continue to promote and encourage people from a culturally diverse background to work at the Department of Education.	Workforce	Career opportunities in the Department are promoted. Workforce diversity data is analysed and reported.	Ongoing
Support staff and other school community members from CaLD backgrounds to participate in Departmental professional learning to enhance opportunities to be engaged in decision-making processes.	Leadership Institute	Strategies to encourage participation of people from CaLD backgrounds are identified.	31 December 2022

Performance information

- Employment diversity targets for people from CaLD backgrounds are progressed.
- Equity index for people from CaLD backgrounds is monitored and reported.

Actions for Policy Priority 3 are linked to the Department of Education’s Strategic directions for public schools 2020-2024 improvement drivers 2, 3 and 5.



Definitions

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD)

Generally applied to groups and individuals who differ according to religion, language and ethnicity and whose ancestry is other than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Anglo Saxon or Anglo Celtic.

For reporting purposes of this Plan, the Workforce definition is used which refers to CaLD as: People who are born in identified countries which are not mainly English speaking.

English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD)

Students whose first language is a language or dialect other than standard Australian English, and who need additional support to develop proficiency in English. These students come from diverse multilingual backgrounds. For reporting purposes of this Plan, EALD data does not include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student data (see LBOTE below).

Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE)

A student that is classified as having a language background other than English if either he or she or the parents/caregivers speak a language other than English at home.

Culture (from Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework)

The characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, encompassing shared values, beliefs, expectations, attitudes, assumptions and norms formed through similar experiences. We develop shared patterns of behaviours and interactions, cognitive constructs and understanding through the socialisation process. This creates a cultural identity fostered by social patterns unique to the group. For example, it can influence what we believe is right or wrong and how we behave towards others. Culture is not just about ethnicity. Culture is dynamic and constantly changing. It is the shared system of learned and shared values, beliefs and rules of conduct that make people behave in a certain way. It is a process for perceiving, believing, evaluating and acting. It is a lens through which we view the world.

Diversity (from Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework)

A statement of fact that encompasses the range of visible and invisible attributes, experiences and identities that shape each individual. Diversity embraces all human differences including but not limited to ethnicity, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values systems and national origin.



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