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It is my view that you need to look carefully at the way Aboriginal people are portrayed in libraries, and you need to reach out to Aboriginal people and show us that we are welcome to participate in an area which we were excluded from for a long time.

Mick Dodson, 2003 (ATSILIRN, 2005)



THE WHALE INSIDE A SCHOOL

Gawura is an indigenous primary school of 25 children. "Gawura" means whale in the language of the Eora tribe of the Sydney region. It commenced in 2007 as a response of St Andrew's Cathedral School to a matter of social conscience, the inequality of educational opportunity for indigenous children.



ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL SCHOOL LIBRARY

The school was founded in 1885 and our new library opened on 7 April 2008. It is an integral part of the school community of about 1500 students and staff and has strong information literacy and reading programs.



DEVELOPMENT OF A GAWURA COLLECTION

Generous donations in 2008 enabled the development of a special collection. It includes texts by Aboriginal authors, Aboriginal language resources, songs, and books on family history of particular tribes.

The process included:

- Consultation with parents and staff
- Joint evaluation of books on approval
- Mapping of tribal and language groups relevant to Gawura children
- Utilising collection development officers in public libraries with indigenous collections, including Ronald Briggs, Indigenous Services Librarian at the State Library of NSW
- Employing the expertise of specialist indigenous publishers
- Using relevant government protocols to develop awareness of areas of sensitivity
- Staff visiting Thursday Island and Uluru to purchase resources



The collection's launch on 18 November 2008 was attended by the Gawura ambassador Professor Larissa Behrendt and the well-known Aboriginal singer Deborah Cheetham.



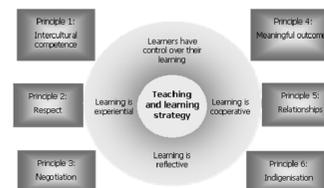
INDIGENOUS CELEBRATIONS

Hosting these demonstrates the value the school places on the culture and promotes reconciliation. It also supports the school's role in building values, understanding and good citizenship. Celebrations included: Indigenous Literacy Day National Sorry Day



INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS

The library staff work regularly with Gawura students to improve research and reading skills through weekly story-times, browse and borrow sessions, Literature Circles and collaboratively developed resource-based units. In developing these units we rely on the principles of indigenous learning model.



(ANTA 2004)

Academic performance of Gawura students has risen dramatically in NAPLAN tests.

TABLE 9: YEAR 5 NAPLAN 2008 RESULTS - SACS / GAWURA / STATE COMPARISON

LITERACY	MEAN					
	SCORE	STDEV	SCORE	STDEV	SCORE	STDEV
SACS	515.9	514.3	495.7	514.3	517.8	517.8
GAWURA	425.1	513.9	462.4	513.9	491.0	491.0
STATE	494.4	495.5	498.5	504.5	497.4	497.4
STATE INDIGENOUS	433.4	437.2	446.8	434.1	438.1	438.1

NUMERACY	MEAN					
	NUMBER, PERCENTAGE & GEOMETRY	SCORE	STDEV	SCORE	STDEV	SCORE
SACS	509.9	513.6	512.2	512.2	512.2	512.2
GAWURA	385.0	433.4	411.6	411.6	411.6	411.6
STATE	489.7	488.0	489.1	489.1	489.1	489.1
STATE INDIGENOUS	426.6	427.3	426.8	426.8	426.8	426.8

(Heath 2008; MCEETYA 2008)

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Many of our young people are like pelicans, floating on the water, clumsy in flight, forever circling, but not able to reach the heights. Occasionally we see one that is an eagle, able to soar, to dip and weave and dive, to play with air currents. We want all our boys and girls to be eagles. Education can make them eagles.

(Yolngu elder, Yirrkala, Arnhem Land - Palmer 2004)

★ Arrival of Aboriginal people in Australia

White settlement
Guerilla warfare

Myall Creek massacre

Protection Policy

Assimilation Policy

Integration Policy

Land Rights and Reconciliation

Apology to the Stolen generations

58000BCE

1788

1820

1838

1860

1876

1936

1965

1967

1990s

2008

Timeline of Aboriginal history

Last Tasmanian Aboriginal dies

Stolen children

Right to vote granted