

# Yalca

**A Partnership in Education and Training  
for the New Millennium**



**KOORIE EDUCATION POLICY  
2001**



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## Foreword

The principles and goals of the *Partnership in Education: Koorie Education Policy* have been Victorian Government Policy since 1990.

**Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium** supports a birth-to-death philosophy of education, placing the student at the centre of education policy and decision making; and acknowledges that local Koorie communities through Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups are best able to determine local education and training needs. In addition Yalca acknowledges the need, and provides the framework to develop and implement collaborative initiatives and strategies across departments and agencies for the benefit of the Koorie community.

Both the Victorian State Government and the VAEAI Committee of Management commit to the principles of the original *Partnership in Education* and look forward to its continued success through **Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium**.



**STEVE BRACKS**  
PREMIER



**GERALDINE ATKINSON**  
PRESIDENT, VAEAI





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## Introduction

The relationship between the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) and the Victorian State Government was formalised in 1990 with the launching of the *Partnership in Education: Koorie Education Policy*. This agreement has provided the framework for the development of strategies to address the goals of the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP)* and established an unprecedented partnership between the Koorie community and the Victorian Government. The ten-year *Partnership in Education*, based on equality and respect, has formed the foundation of a sound working relationship in Aboriginal Education and Training.

At the beginning of the new millennium, it is timely that both the Victorian Government and the VAEAI recommit to improving the educational, economic, and social outcomes of Koorie people through the strengthening of the principles of the original *Partnership In Education*.



## Policy Frameworks

**Yalca:** *A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium* is both informant and respondent to the following State and Commonwealth policies and strategies:

- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (1989)
- National Strategy for the Education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 1996 – 2002
- National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2000 – 2004
- The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century (2000)
- Partners in a Learning Culture (2000)
- Partnership in Education: Koorie Education Policy (1990)
- Koorie 2000 Strategy (1997) and the draft Strategic Plan Yarrabee Bret (2001 – 2004)
- Wurreker Strategy (2000)
- Report of the Ministerial Working Party into Public Education: The Next Generation (PENG) (2000)
- Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria (Kirby Review) (2000)
- Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) (2000)
- Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement (2000)
- Review of the Issues that Impact on the Delivery of Preschool Services to Children and their Families in Victoria (Kirby Review) (2001).

## Objectives

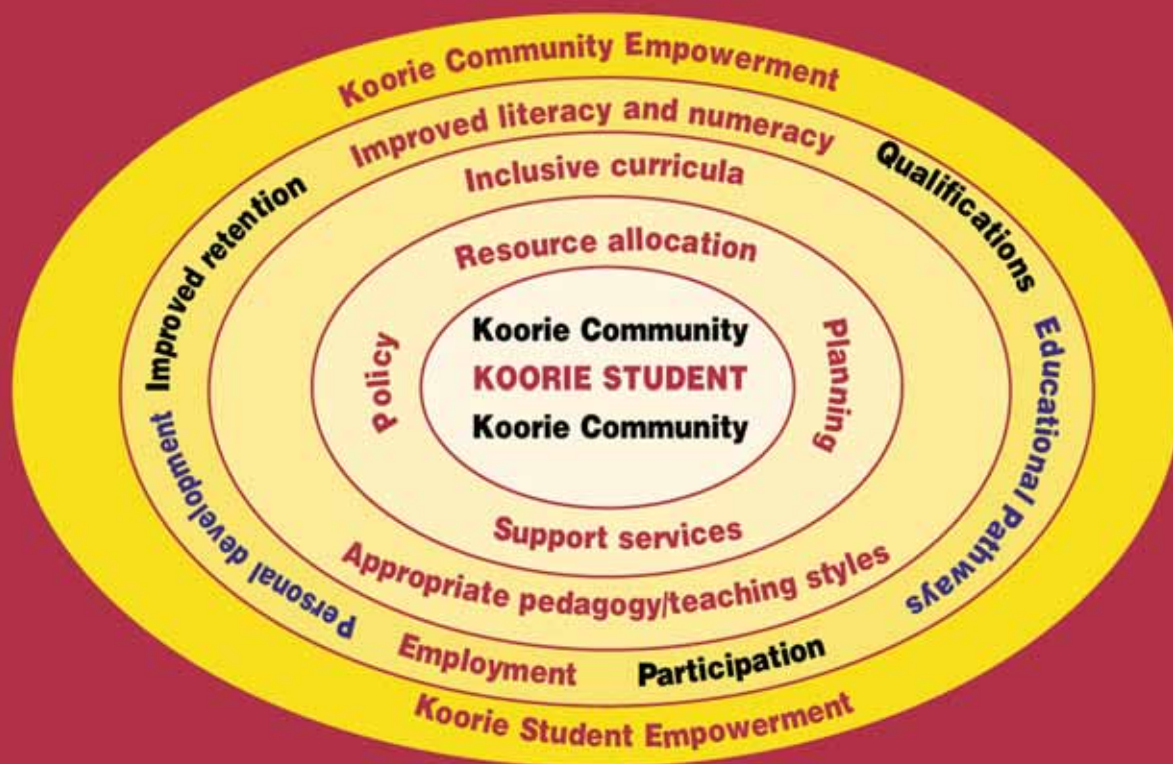
***Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium*** contains six major objectives:

- 1. To place the Koorie student at the centre of educational policy and decision making.**
- 2. To maintain and strengthen the formal partnership between the VAEAI and the Victorian State Government.**
- 3. To recognise the central role of Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (LAECGs) in education and training.**
- 4. To formalise the protocols that inform all education-related discussions and negotiations with the Koorie community.**
- 5. To strengthen the framework, at all levels of education and training, for the implementation of strategies which will –**
  - enable active involvement of Koorie people in educational decision making**
  - increase the participation and outcome rates of Koorie students**
  - provide a supportive and culturally relevant learning environment**
  - provide to all Victorian students an understanding and respect for Koorie traditional and contemporary cultures**
  - increase the number of Koorie people employed within all sections of the education and training system.**
- 6. To ensure that Koorie education forms part of the core business of all sectors of education.**



## The Koorie student at the centre of policy and decision making

**Yalca:** *A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium* reflects a birth-to-death philosophy of education, placing the Koorie student at the centre of education and training policy development, implementation and decision making at all levels.



**Yalca:** *A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium* will build upon the existing frameworks established in the original *Partnership in Education* and will enhance community involvement and decision making in policy, planning, resource allocation and support services.



A seamless approach to education and training provision for Koorie students is required to fully achieve this aim. Collaboration and effort between educational sectors and departments is essential to developing strategies and initiatives which place the Koorie student at the centre of education and training policy development and implementation.

A whole-of-Government approach will further maximize the impact of Yalca's holistic approach to education.

***Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium*** acknowledges the need, and provides the opportunity to develop and implement collaborative initiatives and strategies across departments and agencies.

## **Maintaining and Strengthening the Partnership**

Over the last ten years the *Partnership in Education* has shaped advancements in strategy development, policy implementation and service delivery for and by the Koorie community, and has provided the building blocks for the development and implementation of strategies and initiatives to increase the:

- active involvement of Koorie people in educational decision making
- participation, retention and outcomes of Koorie people in education and training
- awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to the wider community
- number of Koorie people employed in education and training.

A commitment to the concept of equal partnerships, where Government, the Koorie community, educational institutions and all relevant stakeholders work together to develop policy, strategies, programs and services for and by the Koorie community will further build on the achievements of the past ten years.



## Recognising the Central Role of LAECGs

VAEAI's local advisory arrangements are solidly embedded in local communities through LAECGs. The *Partnership in Education* recognised LAECGs as equal partners in the development, implementation and evaluation of education and training programs at the local level.

LAECGs fulfil a significant role in providing the links between Koorie communities, the VAEAI structures, Government departments and education and training institutions. They are best placed to provide local perspectives on education and training matters and highlight the needs and aspirations of local Koorie communities.

The importance of local partnerships is recognised as critical to ensuring that the priorities and goals of *Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium* can be successfully delivered at the local and regional level. The role of LAECGs is acknowledged as fundamental to achieving these outcomes.

*Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium* reaffirms and strengthens the capacity of LAECGs to contribute strategically and operationally to the development and implementation of consultative processes and initiatives.

*Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium* formally recognises the central role that LAECGs play in the development of education and training programs at the local level.



## Protocols for the delivery of services to Koorie communities

***Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium*** reaffirms the relationship between VAEAI and the Victorian Government and clearly determines State and local protocols which will drive the development of strategies, new initiatives and programs in education and training for and by Koorie people.

The protocols will feature in State, regional and local activities to ensure that:

- the Koorie student is at the centre of education policy and decision making at all levels of education and training
- within a strong statewide framework, local Koorie communities are acknowledged as best able to determine local education and training needs.

## Strengthening the framework for the implementation of education and training strategies

***Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium*** provides a long-term policy framework relevant to all sectors of education and training. All education strategies and operational plans which are developed for and by Koorie people will support and be respondent to this document.

The partners commit to developing an agreed evaluation process for continued monitoring of the partnership to ensure that the priorities of the Koorie community are being continually addressed.



## **Ensuring that Koorie education forms part of core business at all levels of education and training**

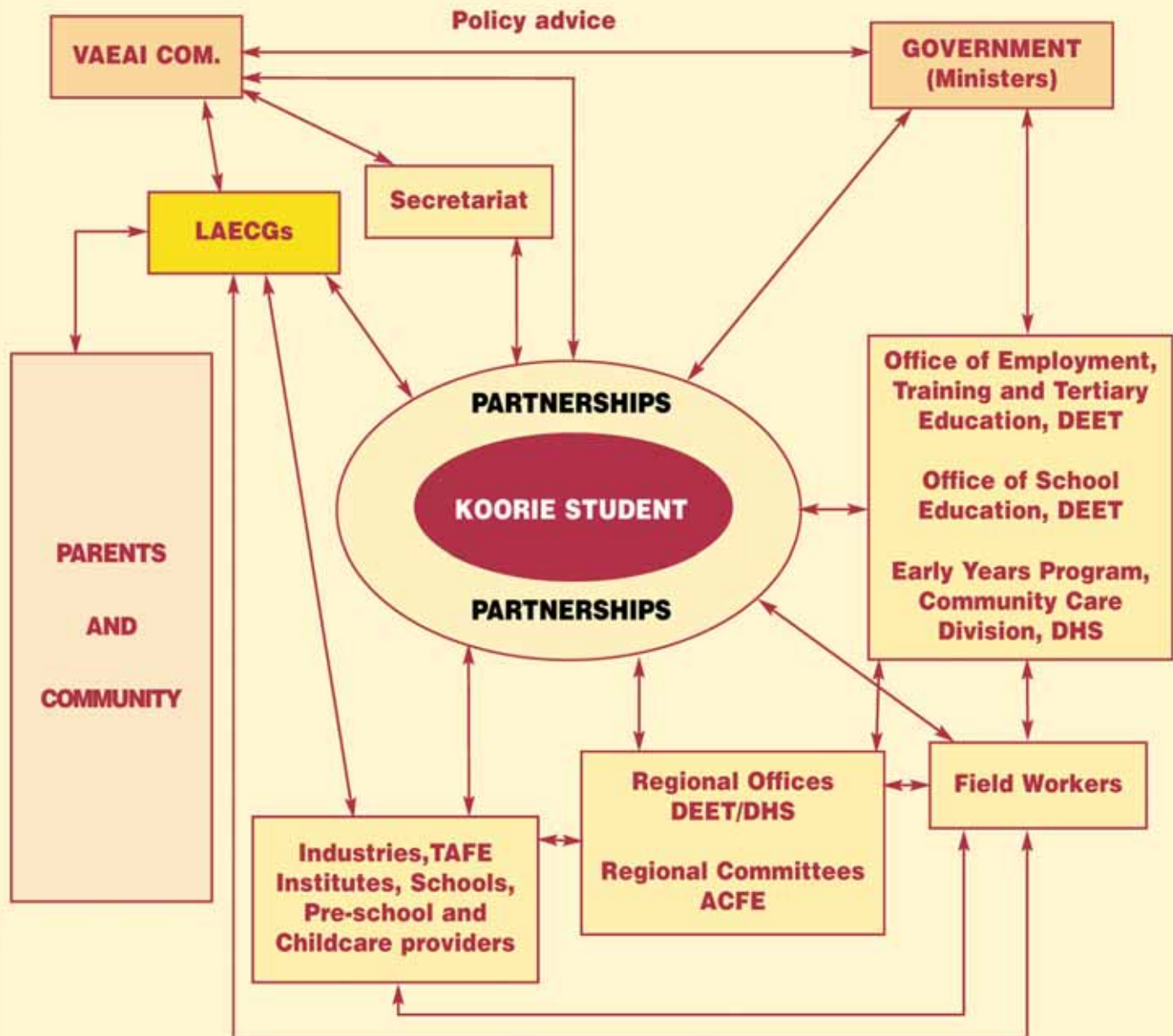
Through the evaluation of many education and training programs and decision-making processes it has been learnt that a fundamental shift has to occur to not only ensure the continuous improvement of educational participation and outcomes, but also to include Koorie education and training and Koorie students as part of core business of Victorian Government services and education and training providers.

The implementation of Koorie education and training as core business at all levels and operations of relevant Victorian Government departments and education and training providers will increase the attainability of the objectives of *Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium*.

Yalca's State and local protocols provide a solid set of guiding principles for Koorie communities to work with the Victorian Government, relevant departments and education and training providers in achieving core business without 'mainstreaming' or 'assimilating' Koorie cultures, identity and self-empowerment.

Through the inclusion of Koorie education and training within core business of Government departments and education and training providers, reconciliation can be achieved through recognition and respect of true cultural diversity.

## State and Local Lines of Operations and Communication



Field workers work with LAECGs to implement local partnerships.



# APPENDIX 1

## Protocols for the Delivery of Education and Training Services State Level Protocols

1. The VAEAI is recognised as the primary source of advice, in relation to Koorie education and training to the Victorian State Government.
2. The VAEAI will participate as equal partners with Government Departments in the planning, development, implementation, operation, monitoring and evaluation of education and training programs at the State level.
3. Government departments and VAEAI have a direct responsibility to:
  - Inform each other of any planned changes to specific education and training funding that impacts on the achievement of improved educational outcomes and service delivery for Koorie Students
  - Work in consultation so that these changes reflect community needs and aspirations and consider all information including relevant data.
4. Government departments and VAEAI will collaborate in the planning, development and delivery of educational and support services for Koorie people.
5. Government departments and VAEAI will maintain continuous communication links in relation to the development of projects and the emerging needs of the Koorie community.

## Local Level Protocols

1. LAECGs are recognised as the primary source of advice on education and training matters.
2. LAECGs will participate as equal partners in the planning, development, operation, monitoring and evaluation of education and training programs.
3. Department field workers will work in partnership with LAECGs to implement the partnership.
4. Any provision of education and training services by Government departments and agencies or its officers will be done in consultation with the appropriate LAECG(s).
5. New education and training initiatives will be approved only after they have been endorsed by the relevant LAECG(s).

## APPENDIX 2

### 21 Goals of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP)

#### Involvement of Aboriginal people in educational decision making

1. To establish effective arrangements for the participation of Aboriginal parents and community members in decisions regarding the planning, delivery and evaluation of pre-school, primary and secondary education services for their children.
2. To increase the number of Aboriginal people employed as educational administrators, teachers, curriculum advisors, teachers assistants, home-school liaison officers and other education workers, including community people engaged in teaching of Aboriginal culture, history and contemporary society, and Aboriginal languages.
3. To establish effective arrangements for the participation of Aboriginal students and community members in decisions regarding the planning, delivery and evaluation of post-school education services, including technical and further education colleges and higher education institutions.
4. To increase the number of Aboriginal people employed as administrators, teachers, researchers and student services officers in technical and further education colleges and higher education institutions.
5. To provide education and training services to develop the skills of Aboriginal people to participate in educational decision making.
6. To develop arrangements for the provision of independent advice for Aboriginal communities regarding educational decisions at regional, State, Territory and National levels.

#### Equality of access to educational services

7. To ensure that Aboriginal children of pre-primary school age have access to pre-school services on a basis comparable to that available to other Australian children of the same age.
8. To ensure that all Aboriginal children have local access to primary and secondary schooling.
9. To ensure equitable access for Aboriginal people to post-compulsory secondary schooling, to technical and further education, and higher education.



**Equity of educational participation**

10. To achieve the participation of Aboriginal children in pre-school education for a period similar to that for all Australian children.
11. To achieve the participation of all Aboriginal children in compulsory schooling.
12. To achieve the participation of Aboriginal people in post-compulsory secondary education, in technical and further education, and in higher education, at rates commensurate with those of all Australians in those sectors.

**Equitable and appropriate educational outcomes**

13. To provide adequate preparation of Aboriginal children through pre-school education for the schooling years ahead.
14. To enable Aboriginal attainment of skills to the same standard as other Australian students throughout the compulsory schooling years.
15. To enable Aboriginal students to attain the successful completion of Year 12 or equivalent at the same rates as for other Australian students.
16. To enable Aboriginal students to attain the same graduation rates from award courses in technical and further education, and in higher education, as for other Australians.
17. To develop programs to support the maintenance and continued use of Aboriginal languages.
18. To provide community education services which enable Aboriginal people to develop the skills to manage the development of their communities.
19. To enable the attainment of proficiency in English language and numeracy competencies by Aboriginal adults with limited or no educational experience.
20. To enable Aboriginal students at all levels of education to have an appreciation of their history, cultures and identity.
21. To provide all Australian students with an understanding of and respect for Aboriginal traditional and contemporary cultures.







**The story to the painting about Wile the Possum and Tyuling the Goanna.**

**Wile and Tyuling are the totems of learning and they are reaching out to all Koories and their communities to carry the message of the need for our people to gain greater knowledge.**

**The eight circles surrounding Wile and Tyuling are representative of the eight VAEAI regions. Grey is the rock of the region, blue relates to rivers in the various regions, green relates to the forest in those regions.**

**The ninth circle in the centre of the picture is the VAEAI community and is coloured red, for this is the heart of VAEAI where all communities have their input.**

**Artist: Kevin J Williams**

## Koorie Education Policy



**Yalca is the yellow box gum tree**

**Language: Yorta Yorta**

The yellow box gum tree symbolises the strength and continuous growth of the partnership between the Victorian State Government and the Victorian Koorie community, through the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc.

The roots of the tree are the Elders and the Koorie community who provide nourishment to the partnership by giving strength, courage and continued support to the goals of the partnership, and whose hard work and commitment to appropriate and equitable education planted the seeds of the *Partnership in Education*.

The trunk is the partnership between Government, educational institutions and the Koorie community, and has the ability for longevity and continued growth and strength. It is the conduit for all educational strategies and operational plans.

The branches are all the strategies and operational plans which stem from the partnership.

The small leaves of the yellow box are the educational outcomes achieved by Koorie communities and individuals.

We would like to thank and acknowledge the Yorta Yorta Nation for allowing us the use of the word 'Yalca' to represent the renewed Partnership in Education and Training.