



STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
CHRIS STEEL MLA (CHAIR), ELIZABETH KICKERT MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), VICKI DUNNE MLA,
CAROLINE LE COUTEUR MLA, MICHAEL PETTERSSON MLA

Inquiry into referred 2016–17 Annual and Financial Reports
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
16 November 2017

Asked by MR PETTERSSON:

In relation to: The Ngunnawal language in Schools Program

In the annual report it says that in this year's budget you are undertaking the measures to strengthen Ngunnawal culture and history in our schools. Can you expand on that for me?

MS YVETTE BERRY MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

Strengthening Ngunnawal History and Culture in Schools expands opportunities for students to engage with Ngunnawal Elders and other key members of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to learn about Ngunnawal history, culture and language with a focus on the plant resources of the local region and places of cultural significance to Ngunnawal people.

To promote awareness and use of *Footprints on Our Land: Aunty Agnes Ngunnawal Elder*, approximately 100 Directorate and school-based staff attended a screening and panel session in November 2016. Aunty Agnes Shae, her grand-daughter Selina Walker and Ms Rauny Worm from the Tuggeranong Arts Centre all attended the screening at the HBCTL and responded to questions from the floor at the conclusion of the screening. The presentations by Aunty Agnes and her grand-daughter reinforced powerful messages in the documentary about respect, resilience and the importance of understanding and acknowledging the previously "hidden" history of our region.

As a strategy to build a sustainable model for embedding Ngunnawal History and Culture in ACT public schools, 19 school-based teaching and learning projects were completed in 2017.

Nine schools completed projects using the *Ngunnawal Plant Use* guide in their teaching and learning programs. Resources and strategies were shared with other schools. The book includes an introduction to Ngunnawal history and natural resource use, descriptions and photos of 69 plant species, including their use, distribution and method of propagation. All participating schools received a copy of the book and associated materials for use in classrooms.

Six schools undertook projects exploring ways to incorporate the film, *Footprints on Our Land: Aunty Agnes, Ngunnawal Elder* in professional learning and classroom activities.

Footprints on Our Land: Aunty Agnes, Ngunnawal Elder celebrates the life of Aunty Agnes Shea, a senior Elder whose tireless service has been a major force of reconciliation in the ACT.

In June 2017, schools involved in these two projects presented their work to an audience of approximately 50 people including Dr Kaye Price, academic and member of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Consultative Group, Mr Adam Shipp, Indigenous Education Officer with Greening Australia, Mr Jason Borton, Director of Learning and Teaching and members of the Education Directorate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network. Curriculum areas covered in the projects included English, food technology, science, drama and visual arts.

In May 2017, four primary schools commenced projects using the Ngunnawal story *Mununja the Butterfly* in learning activities for upper primary students. This beautifully illustrated bilingual text enables students to experience Ngunnawal language and culture.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services

Signature:



Date: 30/11/17

By the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, Ms Yvette Berry MLA