



## MEDIA RELEASE

### First Nations educators drive reform for education system

The sixth Utyerre Apanpe First Nations Education Forum begins today in Mparntwe.

Over 70 First Nations educators from across Australia, will come together at the Desert Knowledge Precinct to reclaim knowledge and language expertise.

The 2024 forum agenda will focus on an implementation plan for the [M.K. Turner Report](#) - a blueprint for First Nations-led and designed education reform in Australia. The implementation plan will be delivered to Territory and Federal governments.

[Launched in Canberra in February 2024](#), the M.K. Turner Report offers six recommendations and outcomes to Australian governments to establish a new First Nations education system, and to strengthen and promote First Nations education throughout Australia. The report was co-designed with over 60 First Nations educators and supported by strong local and international evidence, including the United Nations Declaration of Rights for Indigenous People (UNDRIP).

“The Australian education system is not inclusive enough to strengthen the learning, wellbeing and identity needs of our children. We have a 65,000-year history of how to educate our children and calls are growing to trust and support First Nations methods,” said Carol Turner, Children’s Ground First Nations language worker and Arrernte language custodian and teacher.

“Our children have better outcomes and are stronger in life when their learning is centred in their culture, their language and their Country,” she said.

Recently released NAPLAN 2024 data indicates that the results of First Nations students are well below their non-Indigenous student counterparts across all five testing domains. One in 3 First Nations students were categorised as ‘needing additional support’ in reading and numeracy, compared to fewer than one in 10 non-Indigenous students falling into the proficiency level.

The Productivity Commission’s recent update of Closing the Gap data reported that Target 4 (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thrive in their early years) and Target 5 (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve their full learning potential) are either not on track or worsening.

“We do not want to see our children sitting in the back of the classroom and failing at school. We have given the Government our solution. We have First Nations education leaders in all our communities. We can advise government through our knowledge and lived experience. We must work together to empower our families and children so that we are succeeding in education. We want to see our young people walking proud,” said Carol Turner.

“We have a new Chief Minister in the NT, and a new Minister for Indigenous Australians. We are looking forward to both Territory and Federal governments working with us to reform First Nations education, and working with Utyerre Apanpe to deliver real and meaningful outcomes for our future generations,” she said.

The 2024 Utyerre Apanpe First Nations Education Forum runs from 28-30 August 2024 at the Desert Knowledge Precinct, Mparntwe.

**END**

**Utyerre Apanpe** (Arrente word meaning connection, ties and strings back to the land; pronounced Oo-chera – a-pun-pa)

---

**Contact**

Aengus Cassidy, Senior Communications Coordinator  
0408 427 841 | [media@childrensground.org.au](mailto:media@childrensground.org.au)

---