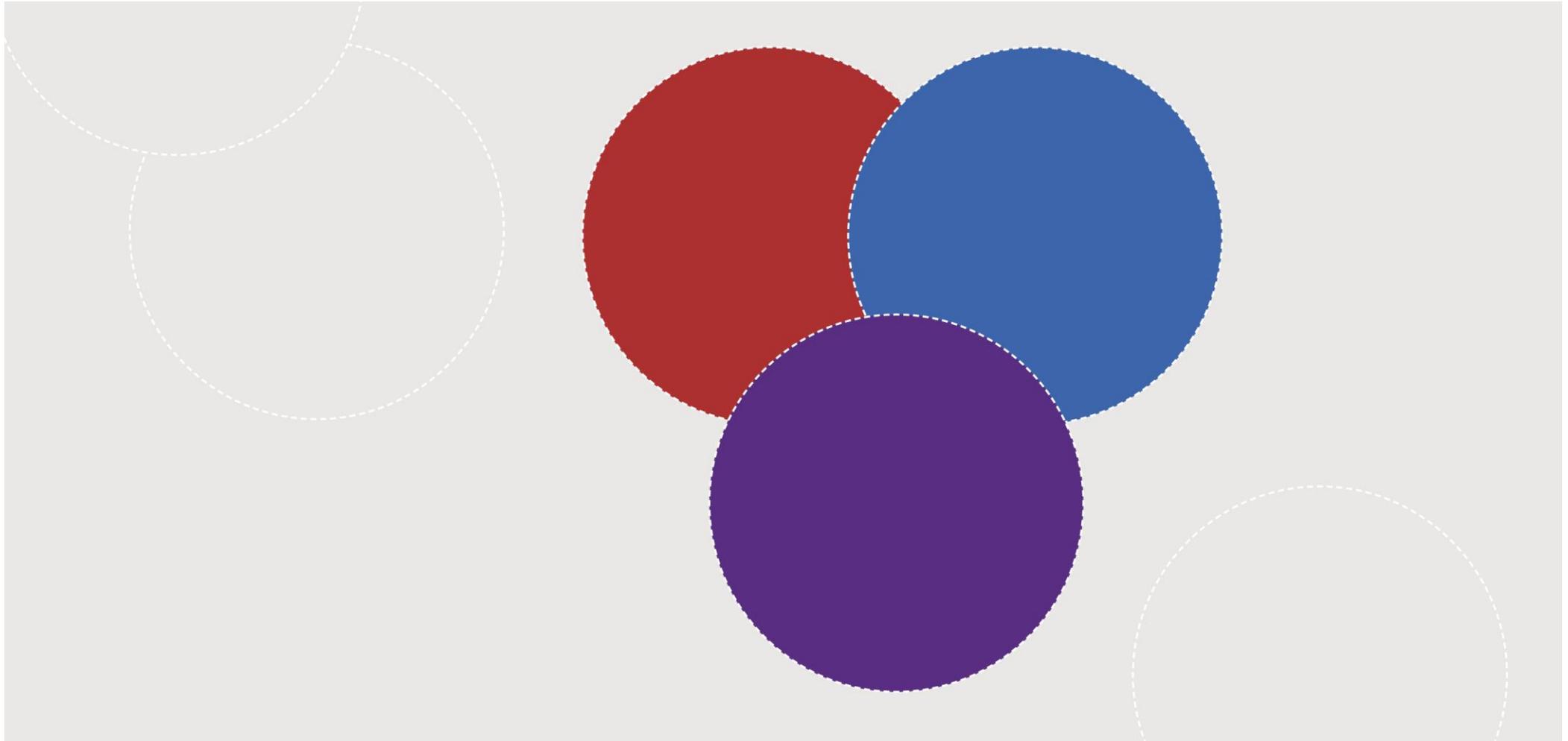


# School plan 2015 – 2017



**Wetlands Environmental Education Centre  
Awabakal Environmental Education Centre**

# School background 2015 - 2017

## SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

At Wetlands Environmental Education Centre and Awabakal Environmental Education Centre, we believe in the importance of students engaging with the environment as part of a life-long learning process. Our guiding principles are Discover, Investigate, and Learn. We endeavour to build student knowledge and skills about the environment through investigation in the field in order to equip them to become active and confident citizens who are ready to embrace a more sustainable world.

## SCHOOL CONTEXT

The Wetlands Environmental Education Centre (established 1986) located at Hunter Wetlands Centre and Awabakal Environmental Education Centre (established 1976) at Dudley are among the 23 Environmental Education Centres and Zoo Education Centres supported by the NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC). Wetlands EEC is responsible for the management of Awabakal EEC. Although the Centres are located in the Hunter we are a state wide resource with schools benefitting from the provision of the services provided from locations across NSW. Students from all three school sectors are accommodated by the two Centres.

Students visiting each Centre benefit from access to a range of ecosystems and leading educational programs directly linked the NSW Curriculum. The focus at each Centre is learning through practical fieldwork experiences in order to build a depth of understanding of various curriculum areas.

Support for local school staff is also an important function central of each Centre. Professional learning for school staff and networking opportunities as well as in school support and incursions all form part of the overall focus on building understanding and awareness of environmental sustainability for teachers and students.

Wetlands EEC and Awabakal EEC do not have enrolled students. Community partners include local teachers and schools, local groups and organisations such as environmental groups, local council, Hunter Wetlands Centre Australia, National Parks and Wildlife Service along with interested individuals. These groups play an important role in delivery of environmental education services.

## SCHOOL PLANNING PROCESS

In 2014, a comprehensive process was undertaken across the school and school partners to review current practices and achievements at the school. Data was collected from visiting schools and local teachers, community individuals and organisations that are in partnerships with Wetlands Environmental Education Centre. Data collected was used by Wetlands EEC staff to develop strategic directions and identify priorities for the 2015-2017 plan. The process included a review of the strengths, opportunities and areas for development across the school. As a result, three strategic directions were identified as the basis for a shared commitment to future developments across the school. These are:

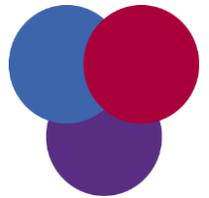
- Curriculum Development
- Teacher Quality
- Leading Sustainability Education

The Wetlands Environmental Education Centre Plan 2015-2017 forms the basis for school development over the next three years while working together with local schools, teachers, community agencies and partner EECs across NSW. Each strategic direction provides details of the purpose (why), people and processes (how), and products and practices (what) that are to be realised through implementation of the plan.

In developing this plan, discussion and consultation occurred with:

- Director Public Schools
- Principal School Leadership Officers
- EZEC Principal and teacher colleagues
- WEEC and AEEC teaching and non-teaching staff
- Local teachers, students and community organisations

During the process it was recognised that consultation with the local AECG, throughout the school planning process, needs to be strengthened and this has been addressed in the body of the plan.



Develop quality educational programs which are aligned to the NSW curriculum and provide engaging, quality fieldwork experiences for students in learning about environments and sustainability.



Develop teacher quality and capacity in order to maximise student engagement and learning opportunities through the development and provision of unique and practical learning experiences in the field with specialised equipment and methodologies.



Involve and support students, school staff and the local community in the process of building successful learners, confident and creative individuals, active and informed citizens and future leaders of a sustainable world.

# Strategic direction 1: Curriculum Development

## PURPOSE

### Why do we need this particular strategic direction and why is it important?

Develop quality educational programs are which are aligned to the NSW curriculum and provide engaging, quality fieldwork experiences for students in learning about environments and sustainability..

## IMPROVEMENT MEASURE/S

- Teaching programs have been evaluated and adjusted to reflect new curriculum in NSW.
- New teaching programs have been developed to increase environmental education fieldwork opportunities available to students.
- All staff aim to engage students in learning about environmental sustainability.
- Staff actively seeking professional learning opportunities to enhance their curriculum knowledge and capacity.

## PEOPLE

### How do we develop capabilities of our people to bring about transformation?

**Students:** involvement in fieldwork and embracing environmental sustainability will be increased through the development of engaging, differentiated teaching and learning programs designed to meet the needs of all individuals and curriculum outcomes.

#### Staff:

Staff capacity to collaboratively plan and develop programs using a variety of pedagogies for fieldwork will be an area of continuing development.

There will be a need to facilitate professional learning opportunities for staff so they have the capacity to effectively implement the new curriculum in NSW as per BOSTES and DEC guidelines.

Further develop staff knowledge, understanding and pedagogy in the development of new educational opportunities for fieldwork

**Community partners** are an important element in the development and delivery of high quality environmental education programs and their input and involvement will be sought in this evaluation and implementation phase.

## PROCESSES

### How do we do it and how will we know?

- Staff will collaboratively evaluate existing programs and develop new programs using a variety of pedagogies for fieldwork.
- Staff will work together to develop a clear understanding of the new curriculum in NSW and explore opportunities for environmental sustainability fieldwork excursions.
- Staff will seek out and participate in professional learning opportunities associated with curriculum change in NSW and links with environmental sustainability education.

**Evaluation plan:** Monitor staff engagement and use of the new curriculum in program development and delivery. Review program development to ensure that curriculum requirements are met. Ensure professional learning needs are addressed in PLP's.

## PRODUCTS AND PRACTICES

### What is achieved and how do we know?

**Product:** Increase the number of educational programs offered at the school which engage students in fieldwork to meet curriculum outcomes.

**Product:** Development of new educational programs which are aligned to the NSW Curriculum and which embed quality teaching opportunities.

### What are our newly embedded practices and how are they integrated and in sync with our purpose?

**Practices:** Teaching and learning across the school will be driven by engagement of students in environmental sustainability via fieldwork opportunities.

**Practices:** Staff will be actively seeking opportunities to participate in professional learning which is in line with school and DEC priorities in order to enhance educational achievement for students.

## Strategic direction 2: Teacher quality

### PURPOSE

#### Why do we need this particular strategic direction and why is it important?

Develop teacher quality and capacity in order to maximise student engagement and learning opportunities through the development and provision of unique and practical learning experiences in the field with specialised equipment and methodologies.

### IMPROVEMENT MEASURE/S

- Teaching programs embed the Quality Teaching elements, variety of teaching strategies and are engaging to students.
- Students achieve environmental sustainability cross curriculum KLA outcomes through the completion of fieldwork Quality
- Teaching is part of core business with staff using a wide repertoire of pedagogies

### PEOPLE

#### How do we develop capabilities of our people to bring about transformation?

**Students:** will be encouraged to use independent thinking skills when conducting sustainability fieldwork activities to meet curriculum outcomes and cross curriculum priorities.

**Staff:** will be working collaboratively to further develop knowledge and skills in relation to quality teaching pedagogies which provide rich opportunities for students and enhance learning outcomes.

**Staff:** will be encouraged to model and share examples of best practice gathered by collaborating with EEC colleagues and participating in professional learning opportunities.

**Community partners:** are an important element in the development and delivery of high quality environmental education programs which are authentic in nature and take into account background knowledge of students. Community members will be included and consulted in the learning and development journey.

### PROCESSES

#### How do we do it and how will we know?

- Staff will revisit the Quality Teaching Framework and participate in professional dialogue
- Working collaboratively, staff will examine and evaluate current teaching programs with a focus on quality teaching opportunities and variety of pedagogies
- New program development will occur collaboratively to ensure a variety of pedagogies and quality teaching elements are embedded into engaging educational programs for students.
- Program development will ensure the achievement of cross curricula and KLA outcomes for students conducting fieldwork.

**Evaluation plan:** Monitor staff engagement and use of the quality teaching elements along with teaching pedagogies. Review program development and delivery to ensure that quality teaching remains a priority. Ensure that staff have sought out PL needs and included these in their Professional Learning Plan.

### PRODUCTS AND PRACTICES

#### What is achieved and how do we know?

**Products:** EEC staff is developing programs which embed the Quality Teaching elements, variety of teaching strategies and are engaging to students.

**Products:** Students have achieved environmental sustainability cross curriculum KLA outcomes through the completion of fieldwork activities.

#### What are our newly embedded practices and how are they integrated and in sync with our purpose?

**Practices:** Staff will embrace the Quality Teaching Framework and integrate elements of it throughout their teaching pedagogy.

**Practices:** Students and teachers participating in environmental sustainability education programs experience a variety of pedagogies which are engaging and enhance learning.

## Strategic direction 3: Leading sustainability education

### PURPOSE

#### Why do we need this particular strategic direction and why is it important?

Involve and support students, school staff and the local community in the process of building successful learners, confident and creative individuals, active and informed citizens and future leaders of a sustainable world.

### IMPROVEMENT MEASURE/S

- New and improved opportunities for student leadership of environmental sustainability have been developed.
- Schools are provided with further opportunities and support for environmental sustainability.
- Staff actively promoting environmental sustainability education in local schools and the community.
- Local agencies and community are engaged in the providing environmental sustainability opportunities for schools.
- Improved consultation and involvement of the local AECG in sustainability education initiatives.

### PEOPLE

#### How do we develop capabilities of our people to bring about transformation?

**Students:** will be provided with a variety of opportunities to be engaged in learning and leadership around environmental sustainability.

**Staff:** will identify and provide learning and leadership opportunities for students, teachers and the community which facilitate environmental sustainability.

**Community partners:** will be consulted and involved in the provision of environmental sustainability opportunities and events which build skills and engage students and teachers.

Local AECG advice and involvement will be sought when developing new and engaging sustainability education programs and initiatives.

### PROCESSES

#### How do we do it and how will we know?

- Evaluation of all current student leadership models and opportunities. Examine ways to improve or expand on these products to meet student learning needs, particularly in light of curriculum changes.
- Examine current school support methods and develop new ways in which schools can engage support for environmental sustainability at their site which is cost effective to WEEC.
- Staff to examine current promotion of environmental sustainability locally and state wide and develop new and innovation methods to lead schools.
- In light of significant changes to local support and other environmental agencies, regroup and plan in order to develop clear pathways for working together which will support and engage local schools.
- Actively look for ways to involve the local AECG in educational programs and practices.

**Evaluation plan:** Monitor and evaluate staff promotion and leadership of environmental sustainability for local schools which involve community partners.

### PRODUCTS AND PRACTICES

#### What is achieved and how do we know?

**Products:** Opportunities for student leadership within a framework of environmental sustainability education are further developed and expanded.

**Products:** Schools will have opportunities to receive support in implementing environmentally sustainable practices.

#### What are our newly embedded practices and how are they integrated and in sync with our purpose?

**Practices:** EEC staff is actively leading and promoting environmental sustainability education in local schools.

**Practices:** EEC staff is engaging local agencies and community groups in the environmental sustainability learning journey with local schools.

**Practices:** EEC staff consults with the local AECG in the planning and development of new programs and initiatives for local students.