

A legitimate pathway for students

Zach – Teacher - Laynhapuy Homeland School

Pilot 1 - December 2022

Zach is a teacher at the Laynhapuy Homeland School in Arnhem Land. The school has been involved in the project since initial consultation in June 2021.

One of the impacts Zach noticed in the pilot was the response from the Elder the school worked with: “We engage with this highly respected Elder across the region to provide some cultural teaching, like running a camp or workshop about a specific topic. He’s one of our go-to people for that delivery.”

Through the Recognition of Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge and Learning pilot, Laynhapuy students received SACE (or NTCET) recognition for capabilities shown through some of these activities. Zach believes the Elder mentioned is supportive of the project. Zach said, “I think him hearing that the knowledge that he’s passing on will actually be recognised formally made him feel really proud and excited to be a part of that.”

It was suggested that the recognition project could have a [greater impact on learning across the community. “I think it can only be a good thing for communities and elders to be more engaged in student schooling,” Zach said. “So having that recognition is really valuable in that sense.”

Expanding further, Zach saw the importance in the value of cultural recognition: “It is a genuine pathway in this context. Some people don’t have formal employment but they’re a recognised authority by the community to go to different ceremonies and perform ‘Manikay’ (the singing and lead ceremonies). It is a legitimate pathway for students.”

The biggest impact for Zach was the intent and symbolism behind the recognition: “[By] recognising the cultural learning you get the student behind you, [and you] get the community behind you. I think that the gesture of recognising community and cultural learnings is the most impactful thing.”