



Boosting confidence and sense of identity

Mitch (Senior Leader - Aboriginal education) – Whyalla Secondary College

Pilot 2

Whyalla Secondary College is uniquely situated between remote and urban life. The SACE Recognition of Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge and Learning program has been instrumental in connecting with the community and recognizing the cultural learning of its students.

"Last year, three students completed the program. These students wouldn't have achieved their SACE without it. They were modified SACE students, and having this option was very beneficial.

In remote communities, students are very tied to their culture. Here, many students are still disconnected due to colonisation. This program is crucial for capturing the cultural learning happening at home.

Many students initially believed they didn't engage in enough cultural activities to participate. This perception was a barrier, but when we explained the program one-on-one or in small groups, they realised they did engage in relevant cultural activities. This realisation was significant, helping them see the importance of their cultural learning and how it could be formally recognised.

One student, a community leader, helped with a cultural painting project, ensuring its quality and telling its cultural significance. Students felt pride in their cultural contributions being acknowledged. They were pleased to see their cultural knowledge recognised in their SACE results. This acknowledgment boosted their confidence and sense of identity.

The main challenge has been getting the community involved, but once we did, it became easier. I explained the process to community members, and they saw its value immediately. We're also looking for more opportunities for other staff members to be trained, so it's not just me signing off on everything. The resources have been amazing and easy to follow, which has been a big help."