REGIONAL EXCELLENCE IN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION AWARD, 2011

Westdale Public School is a P3 school that houses modern facilities in a sustainable, aesthetic and active environment where all students are supported by a caring and committed staff.

The school has a current enrolment of 393 students, with 102 Aboriginal students. (26% in Kinder, 18 in Year 1, 16 in Year 2, 13 in Year 3, 15 in Year 4, 11 in Year 5 and 11 in Year 6). The school has a full time Aboriginal Education Officer, Ms Julie Fuller. Julie is also the Secretary of the Tamworth AECG.

Westdale has been able to provide and sustain a diverse array of programs for our Aboriginal students to improve outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy, Leadership, Sport, Cultural and Social endeavours. Many of these programs are under the banner of T.A.L.E-Together Aboriginal Learning and Education at Westdale.

These programs have been implemented through a combination of Funded Projects (Regional and State funding), School Initiatives (self funded) and Community support.

Some of these initiatives include:

- **Kinder Transition Program** – T.A.L.E-Together A Learning Experience has been designed to support our Aboriginal students commencing Kindergarten in 2011

- **Development of Environmental Projects** - redeveloping and redesigning the Stage 3 outdoor area, building a chicken coop, establishing vegetable gardens and reducing carbon footprints. This has been a tremendous focus for our Stage 3 boys (including 13 Aboriginal students) who have ownership of the ‘new’ area.

- **Digital Elders Project** - Stage 3 Aboriginal students working with our Community Elders, staff and students from Peel High School and Walhallow PS to produce a Digital Story of the Elders life, growing up in and around the Tamworth area. Students have enhanced their digital technology skills, visits into the community to past Aboriginal sites, experience yabbying and playing traditional Aboriginal Games. In addition to the Digital Story, the school has produced a hard copy of the story (1 xA3 book and 30 A4 books), all teaching notes and support documents. This is now a part of our Stage 1 HSIE unit.

- The school has focused the **PE Games Skill** curriculum on traditional Aboriginal games. This is now linked to the Digital Elders Unit, the Active After School Sports program and the School Sports Program. The purchase of appropriate equipment to support the games unit has ensured its implementation.

- Students are encouraged to develop their **leadership skills**. Our 2010 Leadership Team (45 students) had 15 Aboriginal students in lead roles. Every year all Year 5 students participated in a leadership development course, prior to nominating for the 2011 Leadership Team. Our 2011 Leadership Team has 25% representation form our Aboriginal students. Two of our year 6 Aboriginal boys were nominated to attend a Regional Leadership Camp. From this camp, the boys have followed through with a Leadership Project to present at a forum in 2011.

- The school produced and presented a **musical** at the conclusion of Term 3, 2010 - with every student participating. All our Year 6 students (19 Aboriginal students) had leading roles. This was presented at the Town Hall (two performances-booked out) with every students having family members come and watch. The school produced a DVD and photos for the families to purchase.

Enjoy a snapshot of some of our programs and projects throughout 2010.