ROLE FOR SCHOOLS IN RECONCILIATION

Schools can make a significant contribution by closing the gap in educational standards between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia said today.

Association Executive Director Garry Le Duff says better outcomes for Indigenous Australians must flow from Parliament’s apology this morning to the Stolen Generation.

“As an example, educators have a role to play in helping to improve literacy, numeracy and school retention rates among Aboriginal children and encouraging greater entry to tertiary education,” he said.

Mr Le Duff said schools were integral to the challenges of Reconciliation and must deliver results.

“We’ve got work to do and, as part of that, we will be looking at our relationships with Indigenous communities and our students,” he said.

The association today circulated a copy of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd’s apology to all its 96-member schools, which currently have around 430 Indigenous students enrolled.

The association will be reviewing its reconciliation statement and its protocols for enhancing relationships with indigenous communities as a result of today’s parliamentary apology.

Mr Le Duff acknowledged both Mr Rudd and Opposition Leader Brendan Nelson’s contributions as statements of “historical national significance”.

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