

## 1. NARROMINE HIGH SCHOOL – GIRLS ACADEMY PROGRAM

### Introduction

This report is presented to Council as a matter of urgency as the Narromine High School need to provide a formal application for the Girls Academy Program by Friday 10 November 2017.

### Background

The Narromine High School has approached Council requesting assistance to part fund a project with the Girls Academy, a not-for-profit charitable organisation, which works with girls from 12 years old, within the secondary education system, to improve educational and social outcomes. The establishment of a dedicated, physical and permanent base within the school, provides a safe and nurturing sanctuary for the girls to connect with each other and with the Academy staff.

### Issues

The cost of delivering this project is \$7,500 per student, comprising of the following:-

- \$2,500 Australian Government contribution
- \$2,500 private sponsorship contribution via RMLA (Role Models and Leaders Australia)
- \$2,500 School or Department of Education (\$1,250 will be provided by the Department of Education, and the school is required to provide the other half \$1,250 from within their existing budgets).

Two thirds of the required funding, being \$5,000 per student, per annum is required to:-

- provide cultural, sports, nutrition and health programs;
- provide an operational budget for delivery of the program including camps, excursions, sports, nutrition, wellbeing, cultural activities, rewards, incentives, workshops around life skills, careers planning, health and wellbeing and other program activities
- set up of the Academy Room and provide a vehicle for use by Academy staff and students (subject to funding availability)
- 2 Full Time Equivalent employees – Program Manager and Development Officer.

The Girls Academy is steered by a local Advisory Committee made up of Academy staff, the Principal and school representatives, local community and other key stakeholders. The General Manager will be a member of the Girls Academy Advisory Committee.

To date the Girls Academy has increased Year 12 enrolments by 276%, graduation rates by 76%, commitment to tertiary education pathways 41%, and school attendance by 11.2%.

The program is for Indigenous students, however where capacity is available non-Indigenous students can participate (e.g. access to the Academy room and participation in some programs). Narromine High School have indicated that the program will be accessible to indigenous and non-indigenous students, with the exception of designated cultural activities.

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The Girls Academy is only contracted for 800 girls across the state. To accommodate 50 girls at the Narromine High School, the total cost per annum is \$125,000 with the State Government meeting half the cost. The cost for the school is \$62,500 per annum. If schools cannot meet the existing contract, they will be required to meet the full cost of the program.

The General Manager has been in discussions with the Acting Principal at the Narromine High School and the current provider of the Girls Academy. The program is a well-tested model that has significant corporate support.

Council, with the assistance of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, facilitated a social forum on 6 November in Narromine. One of the key themes around the forum focused on education, and in particular the importance of retention of youth in the education system and the provision of training that enables them to have the skills to transition to work. Whilst the Girls Academy is a program that provides an opportunity for girls, if Council were to limit their contribution to \$10,000 per annum, there will be scope to make a similar contribution to a boys program in the future.

**Assessment**

**a) Legal Implications**

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, Clause 241(3) – business may be transacted at a meeting of Council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the Councillors, if (a) a motion is passed to have the business transacted at the meeting, and (b) the business proposed to be brought forward is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency.

**b) Financial Implications**

The cost of delivering this project is \$7,500 per student, comprising of the following:-

- \$2,500 Australian Government contribution
- \$2,500 private sponsorship contribution via RMLA (Role Models and Leaders Australia)
- \$2,500 School or Department of Education (\$1,250 will be provided by the Department of Education, and the school is required to provide the other half).

Narromine High School are seeking a contribution to assist in covering their costs of delivering the program. The total cost to Council will be \$ 10,000 per annum, over a three year period. As the program commences in January 2018, the impact on the 2017/18 budget will be \$5,000 which will be funded from the General Manager's contingency. The forward year contributions will be in the 18/19, 19/20 and 20/21 budgets.

**c) Strategic Implications**

This item relates to the following items in the Community Strategic Plan;

- 1.2.5 Liaise with the Local Lands Council to enhance the opportunities for the Indigenous community
- 1.2.8 Support youth activities within the Shire
- 1.3.1 Advocate where possible for the increased provision of educational opportunities for our youth within the Shire

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2.3.1 Advocate for the maintenance or increase of educational opportunities and training programs

**Summary**

Council is requested to consider this report as a matter of great urgency and resolve that the business be transacted at the meeting given that the Narromine High School will need to submit their application by Friday 10 November 2017.

The Girls Academy works within the secondary school system to provide up to 6 years of mentoring and support to girls to significantly improve their educational and social outcomes. The Girls Academy Room provides a safe and nurturing sanctuary within the school for Indigenous girls to connect with each other and with the Academy staff. The total cost per student is \$7,500, of which the Australian Government provides \$2,500, \$2,500 private sponsorship contribution via RMLA and the School or Department of Education. \$2,500 (\$1,250 will be provided by the Department of Education, and the school is required to provide the other half). Narromine High School is therefore seeking a contribution towards their cost being \$1,250 per student. Council's commitment would be limited to \$10,000 per annum for three years which will be accommodated within existing budgets.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council -

1. Determine the matter is of great urgency and the business be transacted at the meeting;
2. That Council provide to the Narromine High School a \$10,000 contribution per annum, for a three year period for the implementation of the Girls Academy program.

Jane Redden  
**General Manager**