



Warakirri College

Annual Report

2017

Fairfield
Blacktown

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Principal's Message

Warakirri College Ltd is an independent secondary school for Years 10 – 12, situated in Western and South-West Sydney. The college commenced operations in 2007 to assist young people aged 15 to 22 years experiencing major difficulties in completing their secondary education. In 2011 the Fairfield campus opened and in 2013 Fairfield campus was extended to accommodate students from the old Parramatta campus which was closed. In 2017 a second campus in Blacktown commenced operations following an opening ceremony attended by the Hon John Barilaro, Deputy Premier of NSW who was responsible for brokering a partnership between TAFE and Warakirri College.

The first students to complete Year 12 graduated in 2013. In 2014 there was a 100 % increase in the numbers with 8 students graduating from Year 12, in 2016 11 students completed Year 12. In 2017 there were 12 HSC graduates.

The College's name means to *Stand and Grow*; an Aboriginal term consistent with the school's commitment towards creating an adult learning environment encouraging students to engage with their teachers and peers respectfully; exercising acceptable values and good moral judgement.

The school encourages and supports students to develop strategies that build resilience and character despite the significant hardships that many students face.

As a Special Assistance School, the College is proud of its culturally diverse staff and student body. Diversity is seen as a major advantage; with ancestral links from countries located in the Pacific Islands, Middle East, North Africa and Asia, as well as students from Aboriginal communities and of Anglo-Australian and European descent.

Warakirri College receives support from community organisations with enrolments often coming from young people connected to NGOs, charities and of course, local high schools. Many community organisations support the College by presenting at the school's weekly assemblies and the school partners with a range of organisations through excursions, courses and camps.

Warakirri College engages a full-time Counsellor and the school assists students with emergency accommodation, welfare services and post school education and employment. At school the students are provided with all teaching resources, food and clothing. The extent and depth of support for students is a key factor in enriching and diversifying the Warakirri educational experience. Warakirri College does not charge fees.

Together with staff of MTC Australia, the teachers of Warakirri College celebrate the success of each student completing Year 10 or the HSC in 2017.

We acknowledge the students' commitment and tenacity and we wish them every success in the future as they transition to further education and employment.

Carolyn Blanden
Principal

2. Contextual Information and characteristics of the Student Body

MTC Australia

MTC is a social enterprise that is committed to assisting people to gain employment through skills training, work-experience and career planning. As an integrated service provider, MTC offers support through a variety of training courses and services that include case management for young people and a range of community initiatives.

MTC is located in over 22 locations across the Sydney metropolitan area and includes a database of over 20,000 clients who are looking for work or are enrolled in courses that provide accredited training.

As a public benevolent institution, MTC reinvests funds from its surplus back into the community which includes its support of Warakirri College Ltd of which MTC is the sole member.

Warakirri College

Warakirri College offers the NSW Board of Studies curriculum for Stages 5 and 6, preparing students for a Year 10 ROSA or the Higher School Certificate (HSC). The HSC is delivered via an accumulation pathway whereby students study 3 subjects per year, covering both preliminary and the HSC in a 12 month period.

The school provides assistance that includes covering the cost of tuition, stationery, textbooks and excursions. There is no school uniform and students are served a modest breakfast and lunch each day to assist with their nutritional needs and minimise any financial hardships. A number of students live independently and without the support of a family environment. The vast majority of students come from families that receive support from Centrelink, or the students themselves receive these benefits directly.

In 2016 Warakirri College moved from being a division of MTC Australia Limited to being a company limited by guarantee, Warakirri College Limited. The College is a registered charity and public benevolent institution.

During 2017 both campuses were inspected and have been granted registration and accreditation from the NSW Board of Studies (NESA) until 31 December 2022.

3. Student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing

Warakirri College only offers Years 10 and the HSC.

Students do not participate in the NAPLAN testing program.

4. Senior Secondary Outcomes

Results of Year 10 2017

Subject	Number of students	Bands ABC%	Bands DE none%
English	75	44	56
Mathematics	75	43	57
Science	75	23	77
Australian Geography	75	21	79
Commerce	39	13	87
History	75	42	58
Visual Arts	36	42	58
PDHPE	75	33	67

Results of the Higher School Certificate

Subject	Students	Bands 1 – 3%	Bands 4 – 6%	School Moderated Mean%	State Moderated Mean %
Biology	11	100	0	47	74
Business Studies	9	100	0	57	73
English Standard	17	94	6	57	69
Geography	13	100	0	49	75
Mathematics G2	14	71	29	57	69
Modern History	0	100	0	51	74

These results are consistent with those of previous years. With such a small cohort, statistical comparisons are misleading because one or two strong students in a year group would make a significant difference in the data.

Warakirri College has a vast range of students of varying ability and social disadvantage. These mean scores do not reflect the fact that several students applied for University and gained places, while in many other cases students were the first in their families to complete Year 10 or their HSC.

No students studied a VET or TVET course at Warakirri College.

5. Teacher qualifications and professional learning

Teachers with education qualifications	13
Teachers with bachelor degree or AEI-NOOSR equivalent	13
Teachers with TAE	1

Teachers individually completed courses with accredited providers, most commonly at the Association of Independent Schools or with AIS presenters who came to our school. Some courses were delivered as webinars or online courses. These courses were specific to the teacher's subject areas or roles within the College. One teacher participated as a NAPLAN marker.

Teacher Professional Development undertaken in 2017

Course	Number attending
Differentiated Programming	13
Youth Mental Health First Aid	1
Teaching HSC Food Technology	1
Transforming Ability into Talent	2
Inclusive Schooling: sustaining the practice and the process	1
Disability Discrimination Legislation in the Independent Sector	14
Familiarisations: Revised Stage 6 Science Syllabus AIS	1
Mental Health and School Based Support	1
Microsoft Office 365	12
Grief and professional self care – Headspace	8
First Aid	13
Universal Design For Learning ongoing training/coaching from AIS	13
Flexible learning: planning and execution	1
AIS History Conference	2
KLA planning for Modern History	2
Pearson Modern History Workshop	1
TedX Sydney	1
NSW Deputy Principals' Conference	1
Naplan narrative writing	1
Child Protection Legislation	13

Teacher accreditation status

Pre 2004 (Old scheme) teachers including the Principal	3
Teachers accredited at Proficient Level	7
Teachers with Provisional accreditation	4

6. Workforce composition

In 2017 Warakirri College employed the following:

- A Principal, School Counsellor, 4 Receptionists (2 FTE) ;
- 12 full-time teachers and one part-time (0.7) teacher with degrees and teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition guidelines;
- Over 70% of staff come from diverse ethnic backgrounds and one who identifies as being of Australian Aboriginal background .

7. Student Attendance, Retention and Post School Destinations

Student Attendance 2017

Year Group	Semester 1	Semester 2
HSC (Year 11 and 12)	66%	67%
Year 10	54%	51%

2017 Student Retention from Year 10 to Year 11

Campus	2017 Y 10 Students	2017 Year 10 leavers	% retained in school 2018	Progressed to Year 11 2018	Repeat Year 10 2018
Fairfield	38	10	74	18	10
Blacktown	37	16	57	18	3

A poor attendance rate is a common challenge for schools that cater for students from highly disadvantaged communities; particularly where families are experiencing financial hardships and other pressures such as intergenerational unemployment and mental health issues. The risk of these students disengaging from school is very high, particularly for students with an entrenched history of school avoidance prior to enrolling at Warakirri College. Each year there are students who have their enrolment terminated due to lack of attendance. These students are referred to the DET Learning Engagement Officers if they are under 17 years. NESAs are notified of such terminations.

The College continues to review its policies and practices including building strategies to address student non-attendance. A range of measures to reduce non-attendance have been implemented including changes to teaching methods, systematic follow up for non-attenders, phone calls from the College staff, letters to parents, caseworkers and care-givers together with revised documentation collection procedures for recording the reasons for non-attendance and school follow-up.

Post School Destinations

Students who left from Year 10 but were under 17 years were linked up with Transition to Work providers, particularly under the Smart Skilled and Hired program. Those who were over 17 entered employment in the areas of childcare, retail, fast food and apprenticeships.

Year 12 graduate destinations included University, travel industry, veterinary assistant, health care, University transition programs and hospitality. Two students did not gain employment soon after leaving school and one got married and gave birth.

8. Enrolment Policies

Although the policies were reviewed at the start of 2017, the enrolment policy is largely unchanged from previous years and is in accordance with MTC Australia's Policies and Procedures. The Enrolment Policy reflects the mission of the school:

Warakirri College is a school specifically designed to re-engage disenfranchised and at risk young people.

In 2017 enrolment interviews were generally conducted by the Head of Campus or the Principal. In accordance with policies and procedures, the suitability of a student was determined according to the following assessment criteria:

- Assessing the student's capacity and preparedness to re-engage in education;
- Making note of any learning or behavioural difficulties and/or disabilities that would need support following enrolment;
- Ensuring that the student has achieved an academic level Year 9 or equivalent;
- Assessing the student's levels of social, cultural & economic disadvantage;
- Noting that applicants had a general proficiency in speaking, reading and writing English;
- Recording the nationality and country of birth of the applicants and visa details if relevant;
- Recording if the student is from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community background;
- Recording if the student is experiencing a range of issues that include being marginalised or isolated as well as some level of mental health or physical impediment; and
- Recording any mental or physical health issues reported by the student or parent/carer
- Recording demographic data about education level and employment of parents.

The school endeavours to liaise regularly with each student's family; caseworkers, youth-workers, Juvenile Justice workers and any number of health care professionals to ensure that the student's needs are being addressed holistically.

In order to maintain their enrolment, students must not engage in bullying, violent behaviour or conduct that harms other students, staff or school property. The most common reason for students' enrolments being terminated is persistent non-attendance, followed by behaviour that is threatening to students or staff.

The Enrolment Policy and Termination of Enrolment Policy together with all other policies were reviewed March 2017 prior to the 2017 NESA inspection - see Appendix 1.

9. Summary of other school policies

The Student Welfare Policy (Pastoral Care Policy) outlines the College's commitment to addressing the holistic needs of the students who are acknowledged as having particularly difficult life circumstances that result in challenging behaviours. This policy was reviewed March 2017.

The Discipline Policy outlines the processes that are followed in the event of a breach of the disciplinary code. The Discipline Policy applies the principles of procedural fairness and involves parents or care-givers in these processes in the event of a suspension or expulsion. This policy was reviewed in March 2017.

The Discipline Policy is read in conjunction with the Corporal Punishment Policy which states that “Corporal punishment of students at Warakirri College is prohibited and excluded as an unacceptable method of disciplining students. Warakirri College does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-college persons, including parents/carers to enforce discipline.” This policy was reviewed in March 2017.

The Complaints and Grievances Policy outlines who can make a complaint or suggestion and includes the form in which that complaint or suggestion can be lodged and to whom including what processes are used in responding to the complaint or suggestion. This policy was reviewed in March 2017.

The Student Anti-bullying Policy and the Student Code of Conduct (Appendix 2) highlights the importance of respect, responsibility, honesty and describes the actions that staff or students should take to preclude the existence of any form of bullying or harassment including cyber bullying. This policy was updated in March 2017.

Policies are available to be viewed on request. The Student Code of Conduct is read, explained and signed at enrolment interview.

10. School determined areas for improvement.

In 2017 the College implemented a range of strategies designed to improve its operations in the following areas:

- A second campus was opened at Blacktown on the site of the TAFE, offering classes to Year 10 and HSC students by the end of the year there were 80+ students.
- The School completed the implementation of an extensive ICT Strategic Plan;
- Teachers continued their training in a new model for inclusive programming and assessments called Universal Design for Learning;
- The UDL program was implemented and has benefited students;
- Students participated in an outdoor education program involving bush safety;
- Students were involved in a learn to swim program to enhance water safety;
- New programs to transition Year 10 students to TAFE or the workforce were introduced;
- A Special Needs teacher was appointed during the year;
- Educational & financial reporting obligations were met in a timely manner.

11. Initiatives to promote respect and responsibility

Teachers and Administration staff work diligently to promote a culture of respect and responsibility.

This is found in the Student Code of Conduct (Appendix 2) and staff work tirelessly to implement processes to assist students with understanding the expectations and protocols of the College. For example workplace expectations in terms of dress, punctuality, and peer relations are often the subject of class discussions.

During weekly meetings Staff frequently discuss strategies to promote positive relationships. Regular Staff Development Days include training processes engineered around developing values and building a culture of respect.

The College has always taken a strong position about the unacceptability of bullying. As already mentioned intolerance to bullying, makes the school a safe haven that many students have never

experienced previously. Evidence of this is the increasingly large percentage of young people who are in the process of trans-gendering who choose to leave their other schools and come to Warakirri because it is a safe and supportive environment.

In 2017, the College employed a full time counsellor who provided one on one counselling support for students across both campuses. The School Counsellor attends Pastoral Care meetings and presents relevant information regarding mental health issues, learning difficulties and personal challenges.

During Life Skills classes, students covered such areas as positive relationships, ethical communication and more practical topics such as goal setting.

12. Parent, student and teacher satisfaction

Warakirri students are regularly asked to complete a Student Satisfaction Survey, which is then reported to the students at a whole school assembly and all students who leave the College are asked to complete an exit survey. From those surveys and comments that students have made it is clear that:

- Teachers are widely considered to be caring, and accepting of student differences;
- The College is a place where students feel safe and allowed to be individuals and where they have a chance to achieve their goals, despite being excluded from or uncomfortable with mainstream educational pathways; and
- The students like the facilities and food provided by the College and acknowledge the value of the structure provided by the teachers and staff.

Very few of the students have parents who are involved with the school. While most students live with one parent, others live independently. There is no Parents and Friends Association, even-though the school frequently contacts parents of students via the telephone. Approximately 35% of students are 18 or over.

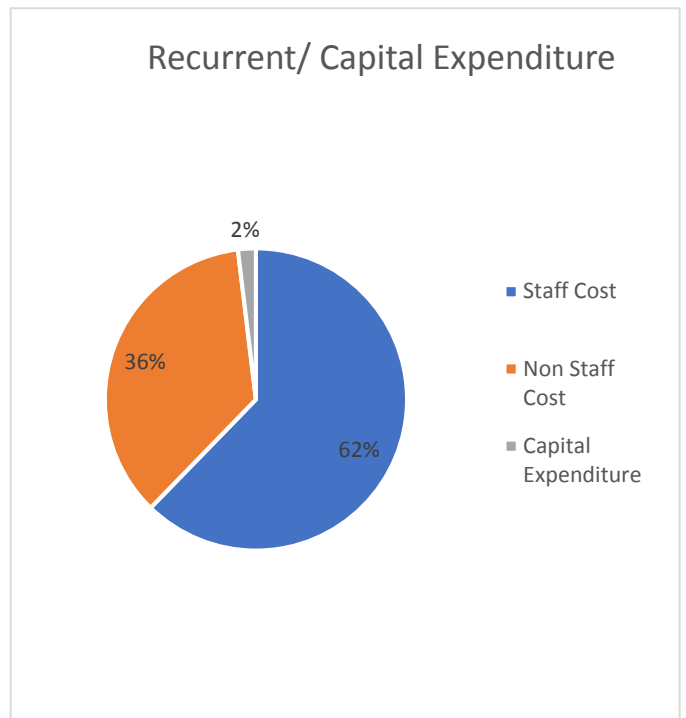
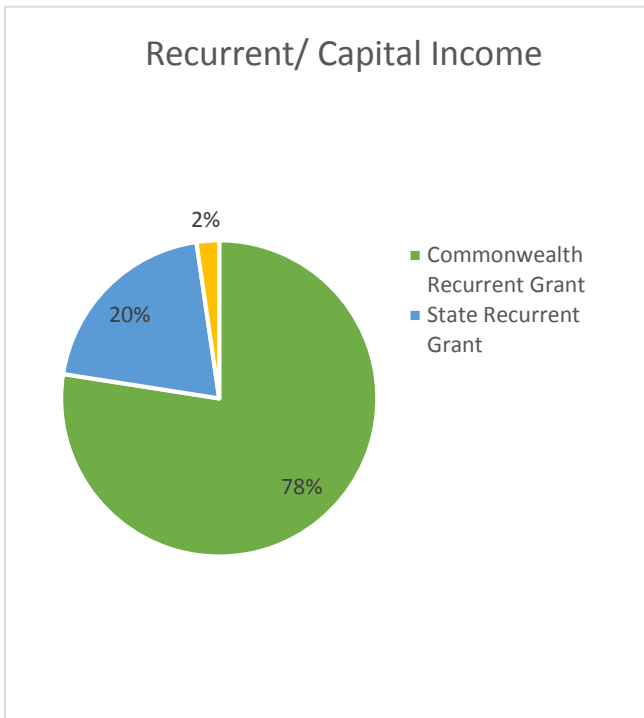
Therefore, only small fragments of anecdotal evidence are available regarding parental satisfaction. Most parents are very grateful to the College as many students are recognised as having had a range of challenges at their previous schools and many parents are delighted that Warakirri will accept their children and persevere with their behavioural issues when no other school will do so.

Referrals to the College come from local community organisations like Salvation Army, Mission Australia, Marist Youth Care, Juvenile Justice, DEC Home School Liaison Officers, Woodville Community Centre, Community First Step, Red Cross, local youth refuges and local high schools to name but a few.

Other community organisations support the school at assemblies or supporting the students to attend presentations on Keeping Safe Online, Staying on the right side of the law, Controlling Gambling, Sexual Health and Contraception, Drug and Alcohol issues. The Cabramatta PCYC and the Blacktown PCYC are the venues for the students' PE classes and the clubs have supported the students' membership and offered a most favourable rate for the school's use of their facilities. The PCYC also sends speakers to the College; in support of the values and goals of the College which are consistent with those of the club. The Fairfield Council Libraries support the College by regularly donating books and resources.

During 2017 there was 1 staff resignation and one permanent staff member moved to casual so that he could fulfil family responsibilities.

13. Summary of Financial Information.



Appendix 1 – Enrolment Policies



Version: 5.0

Updated: 28 March 2017

Revision Date: March 2018

Responsibility: Warakirri College Principal

P 073 Enrolment Policy

“The School’s policies which are made from time to time are made pursuant to the requirements set out in section 47 of the [Education Act 1990 No 8 \(NSW\)](#) and of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESAs) requirements for registration of the school.”

1. PURPOSE

To guide staff in the selection of students for enrolment at Warakirri College, acknowledging that the aim of the College is to assist young people to reconnect with education and complete their schooling.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Warakirri College staff involved in the process of enrolling new students.

3. DEFINITIONS

NESA The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESAs) replaced the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) on 1 January 2017

4. REFERENCES

Section 47 of the [Education Act 1990 No 8 \(NSW\)](#)

[P 082](#) Termination of Enrolment Policy

5. POLICY

5.1. Selection

5.1.1. Warakirri College primarily seeks to support students suffering from social or financial disadvantage, medical, psychological or emotional challenges or who have become disconnected from mainstream education. Students may be facing mental health challenges, Homelessness, dysfunctional families, substance abuse issues, interface with Department of Juvenile Justice, early parenthood, neglect, living independently in

refugees or have recently settled in Australia as part of the humanitarian resettlement / refugee program.

5.1.2. Warakirri College cannot cater for students who are functionally illiterate in English or who require intensive behaviour or health support. Access to a Counsellor is available to all students who are enrolled in the school, but the College is not in a position to manage students who cannot operate within the adult learning environment.

5.1.3. All students who apply to attend Warakirri College will be required to attend an interview as part of the application process. If practicable a Parent / Guardian / Caregiver/Case Worker is required to attend to learn about the College and contribute to the information shared. Candidates 18 years or over may be able to attend an interview alone. Candidates under 18 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

5.1.4. Applicants are expected to make a full disclosure of relevant details at interview and if a Student is accepted and undisclosed information relevant to the acceptance decision becomes available, then the Student's enrolment may be reviewed at the discretion of the Head of Campus or Principal.

5.1.5. A student's acceptance into the College is dependent on their presentation at interview, the documentation they provide and their demonstrated ability to work within the policies and philosophy of Warakirri College

5.1.6. All applicants must provide proof of age and evidence of Australian citizenship or permanent resident status or 200 or 202 class visa. Photocopies of the supporting documents are placed in the student files.

5.2. Enrolment

5.2.1. Students enrolled at Warakirri College may be required to undergo Literacy and Numeracy assessment or other cognitive testing, if the teaching staff deems it necessary. This assessment may be conducted prior to enrolment or post- enrolment at the discretion of the relevant teaching staff.

5.2.2. Except in exceptional circumstances, (e.g. Refugee status) prospective students are required to provide evidence of prior learning and a copy of the most recent school report from the last school they studied at. If necessary, Warakirri College will contact the past school to confirm details of the prospective student's enrolment and reasons for leaving or to obtain a copy of the report. Where required, further contact may be made with other relevant organisations before a student's enrolment application is accepted.

5.2.3. Students entering Year 10 enrolment must demonstrate that they had significant participation in year nine studies, or equivalent or that they are suitable for year 10 enrolments as determined by the Principal or Head of Campus.

5.3. Acceptance

5.3.1. Successful applicants will receive a letter confirming their enrolment.

5.3.2. Copies of all supporting documents, credentials provided by the student are kept in the student's file.

5.4. Withdrawal

5.4.1. Warakirri College recognises the commitment they ask of their students will not suit everyone's needs and respects the right of any candidate to withdraw their application for inclusion in Warakirri College.

5.4.2. If a candidate makes the choice to withdraw their application for enrolment this does not mean they cannot apply again at a later date.

5.4.3. Should a student terminate their enrolment at the College, following a period of attendance, the College will consider a request to re-enrol, at the discretion of the Principal.

5.5. Termination of Enrolment

5.5.1 Refer to the following:

[P 082](#) Termination of Enrolment Policy

6. VERIFICATION

Internal Audit



Version: 4.0

Updated: 28 March 2017

Revision Date: March 2018

Responsibility: Warakirri College Principal

P 082 Termination of Enrolment Policy

“The School’s policies which are made from time to time are made pursuant to the requirements set out in section 47 of the [Education Act 1990 No 8 \(NSW\)](#) and of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) requirements for registration of the school.”

1. PURPOSE

Warakirri College endeavours to provide an inclusive learning environment to meet the needs of young people who have become disconnected from mainstream schools. Supportive, professional staff encourage students to maintain their enrolment and to complete their secondary education.

2. SCOPE

The policy applies to all Warakirri College staff: Managers, Teaching and Administration Staff and Warakirri students.

3. DEFINITIONS

[NESA](#) The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) replaced the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) on 1 January 2017

4. REFERENCES

[Education Act 1990 No 8 \(NSW\)](#)

5. POLICY

5.1 A student's enrolment may be terminated by the College in the following circumstances:

- a. The student exhibits violent, threatening, aggressive or abusive behaviour or damages school property or acts in a manner that is offensive or could reasonably be expected to damage school property or be harmful to staff or students.
- b. A student consistently behaves in a way that obstructs the learning or jeopardises the well-being of other students. This may include bullying, misbehaviour in class, refusing to follow reasonable instructions from College staff, refusal to conform to school expectations,
- c. A student persistently acts in a manner that is contrary to the Student Code of Conduct.
- d. A student has a high rate of absenteeism and does not provide documentation or supporting evidence from a parent/ carer/ guardian/ health professional/ Juvenile Justice or Youth Worker etc to justify the absences.
- e. The Principal, in consultation with College staff determines that it is no longer in the interests of the student or the school community for the enrolment to be continued. This may occur in situations where the College is unable to meet the learning, social or health care needs of the student or other circumstances.

5.2 The procedure for termination of enrolment will vary depending on the circumstances.

5.3 In the event of summary termination of enrolment, the College will contact the student's parent or guardian (if applicable) or the student and notify them by telephone or in person that the student should not return to the college. This notification will be confirmed by mail.

5.4 Where a student has discontinued attendance, the College will send a letter expressing a preliminary intention to terminate enrolment within 14 days unless due cause can be shown as to why the enrolment should be maintained.

5.5 Should the College receive no response or an inadequate response then the termination of enrolment will be confirmed by a second letter.

5.6 Where a student has indicated that they are receiving income from Centrelink the College will notify Centrelink of the termination.

5.7 Where a student is under 17 years, the College will either oversee transfer to an alternative education provider or contact the State Department of Education to notify them of the student's termination of enrolment. The College will notify NESAs of the termination of enrolment as required.

Appendix 2 – Student Code of Conduct

As a student at Warakirri College, I know I have the right to:

1. Enjoy a safe and supportive learning environment free from discrimination or harassment;
2. Speak to Warakirri staff about any issues in my personal life or life at school that may adversely affect my education or welfare either at school or at home.

As a student at Warakirri College, I know I have the responsibility to follow the Student Code of Conduct and I understand that my position in the College will be at risk if I breach this code.

Warakirri College Student Code of Conduct

At Warakirri College students agree to:

1. Act in a manner that is respectful and supportive of staff and students;
2. Take responsibility for their actions;
3. Come to class on time, prepared for lessons with appropriate books, completed homework and necessary equipment;
4. Supply a note for all absences, including partial absences;
5. Participate in a conscientious and responsible manner in all College activities;
6. Be co-operative in class and support other students' learning;
7. Take responsibility for personal belongings and respect those of others;
8. Dress in a manner that is respectful of others, in keeping with workplace dress codes and the Warakirri College Student Dress Code;
9. Turn off electronic devices during class time and hand in mobile phones as requested by teachers;
10. Not bring weapons or dangerous items of any kind to the College;
11. Not bring or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or non-prescribed medication;
12. Not graffiti or damage any item on College premises;
13. Not smoke less than 10m from any College premises;
14. Not commit or engage in any dishonest or unfair act in relation to an examination or other form of academic assessment;
15. Not engage in any offensive conduct or unlawful activity.

I have read and understand all items in this contract and I agree to comply with it to the best of my ability. I understand that if I do not honour any part of this contract I can expect to face disciplinary action and that my position at the College will be under review. I understand that I am able to discuss or get clarification on any item in this contract or related College policies and procedures at any time upon request.

Student's Name: _____

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

(If applicable)

Name of Parent/Guardian:

Parent/ Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____