

Aboriginal HPG Students Program

Information for Principals



Aurora College – Igniting new ways of learning

- Aurora College, the state's first virtual school, commenced classes in 2015. The school was a key deliverable of the [Rural and Remote Education – a Blueprint for Action](#). Aurora College is a gazetted, 'stand-alone' school.
- Aurora provides a mix of online and residential school classes. Students connect with their teachers and classmates in timetabled lessons through a virtual learning environment, which comprises video conferencing software, a learning management system, and a range of cutting-edge online communication and collaboration tools. The school also operates one of the state's first fully digital school libraries.
- Our school offers:
 - Year 5 and 6 students Opportunity Class lessons in Mathematics, Science and Technology
 - Year 7 to 10 students Selective School classes in English, Mathematics and Science
 - Year 11 and 12 students the opportunity to study one or more Preliminary and/or Higher School Certificate subjects that may not be available in their local school.
- Students study the balance of the curriculum in their local government school. This unique provision allows students to access a challenging academic program without the need to leave their local community. This model helps students to learn by grouping them with other students of similar ability, and by using specialised teaching methods and educational materials at the appropriate level.

The virtual Aboriginal High Potential and Gifted Students Program

- The Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate (AOPD) is funding this program over 5 years. In developing the model, the AOPD has worked closely with the Aurora team and with a project reference group which has wide representation from across the community and within the Department.
- Our partner schools and local AECGs will be integral to the support and ongoing development of the program.
- The aims of AHPGS program are to:
 - support students to reach their learning potential while maintaining **connectedness to culture** and the community
 - improve **student engagement and retention**
 - enhance **transition of students to high school** and improve HSC pathways
 - increase the proportion of students in the **top two NAPLAN bands for literacy and numeracy** (Stages 4/5)
 - build and maintain **stronger community partnerships**.
- Potential students have been identified by the Department as Year 5 Aboriginal students who achieved in the top two bands in the Check-in assessments of 2020 and 2021.
- Each student of the AHPGS program will:
 - complete an orientation program in Year 5 in Term 4 (2022)
 - study Mathematics, Science and Technology in Year 6 (2023) at your school
 - study Mathematics, Science and English in Year 7 (2024) and Year 8 (2025) at the student's Department high school.

How will Aurora and the home (partner) school work together?

- When a student enrolls in Aurora College they become a shared enrolment between Aurora and their home school. In this educational partnership, both schools must plan for and support the curriculum of each shared student.

- Aurora will provide students with a laptop, headset and webcam to participate in lessons. Participating primary schools will be required to provide a desktop computer and allocated Aurora space to support student learning. The student laptops can be taken home to complete set tasks and support learning in all areas of the curriculum.
- The operational model of Aurora College is based on face-to-face, real time lessons. This model requires each partner school to build part of their timetable from the common timetable template.
- Supervision will be provided by the Aurora College teacher as well as by the home school. Students will be working in a space that is visible to staff at the primary school they attend.
- In each partner school, Aurora funds the release of a suitable teacher to fill the role of Aurora College Coordinator (ACC). The ACC adds an important layer of support for the educational, social and emotional needs of our high potential and gifted students. The ACC is an important advocate of Aurora College in the partner school and in the local community.
- The Stage 3 curriculum has a STEM-focus, delivered through an inquiry-based learning approach. Students study the content of the Mathematics and Science and Technology syllabuses. Aurora College has sole responsibility for teaching, assessing and reporting in these areas of the curriculum. The home school delivers the balance of the curriculum.
- Following the Department’s guidelines, Aurora College produces a full academic report at the end of Semesters 1 and 2. An interim report is also provided early in Term 1. Parent/teacher interviews are conducted in Term 2 and as required.

Stage 3 program overview

- During Term 4 (2022), Year 5 will undertake an orientation program which builds their confidence and proficiency in the use of the various learning platforms and technological components.
- In Year 6 (2023), students will undertake Aurora lessons in the 2 key learning areas of Mathematics and Science and Technology. To accommodate the required hours, the Aurora timetable allocates a total of 400 minutes of lesson time throughout the week.
- Partner schools will make their timetable selections for Year 6 in Term 4 (2022).
- A Residential School in Term 2 gives students the opportunity to meet and work with their peers and teachers. The college provides supervised bus transport to and from the residential school. The program includes lessons, tutorials, masterclasses, mentoring sessions and excursions. Transport and accommodation costs for AHPG students will be paid for by the program.
- The Masterclass Program is a key component of the online and Residential School programs. Students are able to connect with and learn from a variety of individuals and organisations who are leaders in their chosen field.

Need further information?

- Further information on partnering with Aurora College in Stage 3 is provided in a suite of support documents on the partner school page <https://aurora.schools.nsw.gov.au/learning/aboriginal-hpg-students-program.html>
- Please contact Chris Robertson (Principal) or Serena McLean (A/Deputy Principal Primary) on 1300 287 629 or email at auroracoll-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au
- View the following videos:

