



## Media Release

**28 November 2024**

### **Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders: Emerging Leaders Program extended!**

Since 2018, Townsville Catholic Education, in partnership with the Australian Government, has proudly delivered the Emerging Leaders Incentive Scheme, a transformative First Nations Education program. This initiative empowers students to become proud, confident and capable leaders of tomorrow by addressing educational disadvantages faced by First Nations students.

Although the initial funding for the program was set to end with the 2024 school year, we are thrilled to announce that the project has been officially extended until December 2026!

The Emerging Leaders Incentive Scheme, designed by three remarkable female Aboriginal educators, was made possible through a grant from the National Indigenous Australians Agency. Developed with First Nations voices and knowledge, the program engages students more deeply in their learning, creating greater opportunities for success during their secondary education.

Since its inception, the program has positively impacted over 4000 students, enhancing their attendance rates, academic growth, and personal engagement within the school and broader community.

In 2024, the program supported over 640 students across 11 secondary schools in the Townsville Diocese, including two boarding schools. By reducing financial barriers, it ensures that all students can access a Catholic education.

"The impact of the Emerging Leaders Incentive Scheme on our First Nations students has been outstanding," said Tammi Webber, First Nations Education Adviser, and the Program Coordinator at Townsville Catholic Education.

The Emerging Leaders program has provided First Nations students with incredible opportunities, such as Blak Excellence and the Mental Health & Wellbeing Roadshow.

Blak Excellence is an aspirational afternoon which features keynote speakers who are the epitome of successful First Nations people in various chosen fields, and a chance to celebrate the achievements of our First Nations students.

The Mental Health & Wellbeing Roadshow is a three day event which is run as a series of cultural and wellbeing workshops where students rotate between deadly workshop presenters who share their stories and provide real tools and strategies that can be used to support our young people to stay strong, particularly when they may face challenges in their lives.

"From our first initial draft, we identified that a positive sense of culture and identity would be key to driving success. It makes us extremely proud to acknowledge that First Nations agency and

determination have provided the foundation for so many successful outcomes for our students, schools, families and students over the past seven years.”

Townsville Catholic Education remains dedicated to First Nations education, ensuring students have access to culture, role models, and truth-telling within their schools.

The extension of the Emerging Leaders Incentive Scheme is a testament to our unwavering commitment to educational excellence and cultural enrichment. With the continued dedication of our educators, mentors and communities, we will create a lasting change and inspire students to achieve their full potential.

We are so proud to continue the legacy of Emerging Leaders into the future. We are excited to see our students flourish and lead with pride, strength, and resilience as we build a better tomorrow.



**Ends**

**Marketing contact:**

Karolien Kern, Senior Marketing & Communications Coordinator, Townsville Catholic Education  
P: 0417 227 049 | E: [kkern@tsv.catholic.edu.au](mailto:kkern@tsv.catholic.edu.au)