

Evaluation of Nawarddeken Academy Part 1: Establishing a homeland school on Bininj Country

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In 2015 a small homelands school was established by the newly formed Nawarddeken Academy Limited. The school, located in the homeland called Kabulwarnamyo, about 100km to the east of the town of Jabiru in West Arnhem Land, was developed to ensure that Bininj working on Country in the Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area, would also be able to provide their children with a good education. Nawarddeken Academy was registered as an independent school in 2019 and as part of its development, embarked on a formative and participatory evaluation designed to inform strategic planning processes and ensure that learnings could be translated into improved schooling opportunities for young Bininj students. Bininj community researchers have been working together with researchers from the Batchelor Institute of Tertiary Education since 2018 to conduct the evaluation.

In this presentation, Bininj researchers will tell the story of the establishment of the Nawarddeken Academy, starting with the vision of senior elders in 2001, leading to the present day. Researchers from Batchelor Institute will describe the rationale for evaluation in this context, and what it set out to achieve.