

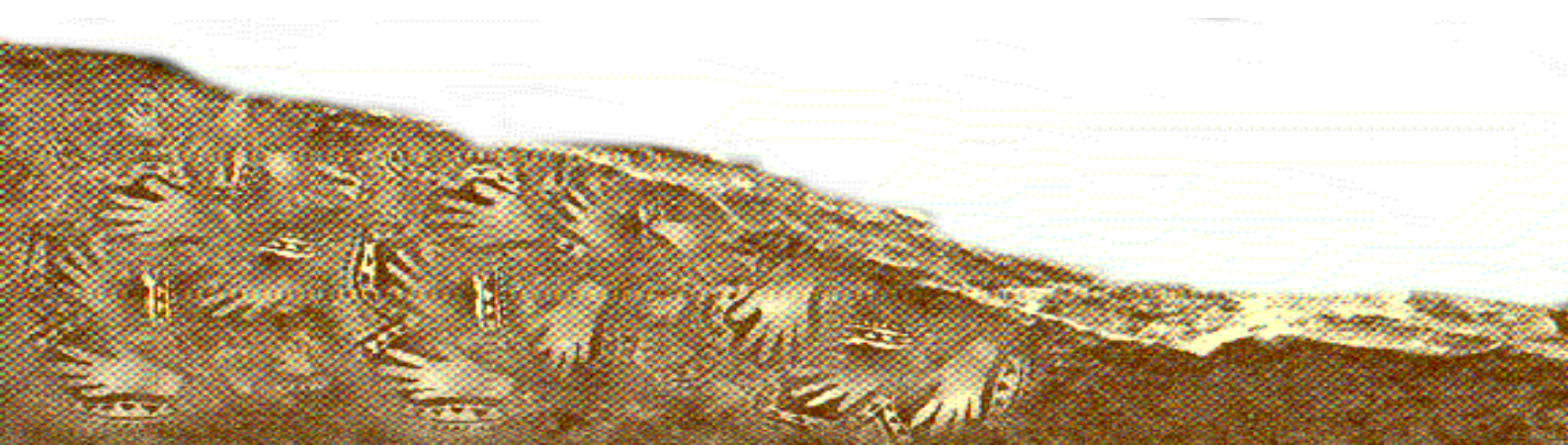
# **LEARNING LESSONS**

## **THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE**

Status Report

Learning Lessons Implementation Steering Committee

October 2005



# LEARNING LESSONS THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

## FOREWORD

In Australia today we find ourselves in a changed environment, and our children need to know how to thrive and succeed in a Western society as well as in their own Indigenous society. We continue to teach our children in our ways, but we also want our children to have the best possible Western education so they can fully participate in all that Australian society has to offer.

English is the language of power in Australia and until Indigenous people are literate and numerate in English, they will be denied true acceptance and participation in the power structures of this country. One of the biggest barriers to improved educational outcomes is attitudinal. Indigenous people do not see the relevance of a Western education and Western educators do not acknowledge the relevance and importance of Indigenous knowledge and learning styles. It is essential that these two polarised views be brought together as true partnerships so that equal value is placed on traditional culture and values and Western educational objectives.

Education should not just be about literacy and numeracy, it should be education for life, and for Indigenous people this means education for their traditional roles as well as education for the broader Australian society. When the people feel this gap has been successfully bridged, their confidence in dealing with others will improve and their ability to operate within a Western style of governance will be strengthened.

The issues facing Indigenous education are complex with many dependant variables. The issue is far from the simplistic view of improved literacy and numeracy outcomes. Nor can the issues be dealt with one at a time. Because of the close interrelationships, a cohesive approach must be taken that acknowledges how each element will impact on the others. This is a challenge that must be faced head on, because I firmly believe that education has an essential role to play in the desperately needed improvements to life and governance in Indigenous communities.

Black and white Australians must walk this path together with neither side assuming positions of superiority or inferiority; there must be give and take, and education that is appropriate to these needs is the essential ingredient.

There is no doubt that the members of the LLISC will continue to contribute to Indigenous education in the future. I would like to pay tribute to each and every one of them here: The Honourable Bob Collins, Ms Pat Anderson, Ms Beverley Angeles, Ms Carmelita Dunn, Mr Akarriyuwu Hill, Mrs Kilipayuwu Puruntatameri, Mr David Ross, Mr Patrick Puruntatameri, Ms Valda Shannon, Mrs Didamain Uibo, Mr Shane Williams, Mr Warren Williams, Ms Katherine Henderson and also to Mr John Glasby, Mr Greg Gibbs and Ms Dorothy Morrison who sat on the Committee in the latter stages of the implementation phase.

This report summarises what we achieved in the four years. It was not just our work, but also the work of many. Our fourteen member committee worked closely with a small secretariat team in DEET headed by Ms Barbara Weis for much of the four years, and ably supported by Ms Suzie Peckham and Mrs Sue Boyd. The Indigenous Education Division also provided the strong support required for implementing the recommendations.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the teachers of Indigenous students across the Northern Territory, particularly the Indigenous teachers, many of whom have dedicated many years to the children in their local community. A solid school education gives our children the skills and knowledge to participate in all aspects of society, and it is the tremendous commitment of teachers that ultimately makes all the difference.

ESTHER DJAYHGURRNGA

Co-Chair: Learning Lessons Implementation Steering Committee

September 2005

**NOTE: Learning Lessons recommendations are directed to the Northern Territory Department of Education (NTDE). This was the name of the department at the time of publication in 1999. In 2001, with a change of government, NTDE became the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET). For the sake of simplicity and consistency of terminology, this report will use the term 'DEET' when describing the implementation of the review.**

## SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### PURPOSE

---

This is the final report of the Learning Lessons Implementation Steering Committee (LLISC). This report describes the work and the achievements of the LLISC in its role to manage the implementation of 151 recommendations from Learning Lessons, an Independent Review of Indigenous Education in the Northern Territory (Learning Lessons). The report contains information about the implementation status of each recommendation, the major achievements and challenges of the implementation phase since 2000, and the way forward for Indigenous education in the Northern Territory.

This report pays tribute to the work, the dedication and the achievements of the LLISC. They were set a significant task, and they have achieved a great deal to improve Indigenous education in the Northern Territory. The challenge for the LLISC is summarised in the inaugural meeting of the committee by the two co-chairs, The Hon Bob Collins and Ms Esther Djayhurrnga.

*BOB COLLINS: I cannot think of anything more important as far as the NT is concerned than having this group of people dedicated over the next couple of years to attempt to assist in improving educational outcomes for Indigenous people. I am very grateful to all of you for agreeing to serve on the committee. You can see from the agenda that we are basically setting the stage here.*

*ESTHER DJAYHGURRNGA: I am looking for a challenge and I know we will try and do our best to improve our educational outcomes.<sup>1</sup>*

This report brings to a close the work of the Learning Lessons Implementation Steering Committee. In future a Northern Territory Indigenous Education Council will be formed to guide the direction of Indigenous education.

### BACKGROUND

---

In 1998, the NT government commissioned a review of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory. The terms of reference for the review were to establish:

- the views and educational aspirations of Indigenous parents and community members in relation to their children's schooling, with particular reference to English literacy and numeracy
- the key issues affecting educational outcomes for Indigenous children
- supportable actions for educational outcome improvements

The result was Learning Lessons, an Independent Review of Indigenous Education in the Northern Territory, (Learning Lessons) completed in 1999 by the Hon Bob Collins and Tess Lea. Learning Lessons contained 151 recommendations. During the

---

<sup>1</sup> Learning Lessons Implementation Steering Committee Transcript, 14 March 2002

year after the publication of Learning Lessons, the Indigenous Education Division<sup>2</sup> developed the *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2000 – 2004*. The strategic plan was designed to address the recommendations of the review. In 2001 the new NT Labor government endorsed the *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2000 – 2004* as the framework to implement Learning Lessons recommendations. During this time, the Indigenous Education Division was also working on strategy documents to address the Learning Lessons recommendations.

In 2002 Cabinet established the 14-member<sup>3</sup> Learning Lessons Implementation Steering Committee (LLISC). The committee was co-chaired by ex-Senator for the Northern Territory and author of Learning Lessons, the Hon Bob Collins, and the principal of Gunbalanya Community Education Centre, Ms Esther Djayhgurrnga. Since the inaugural meeting in March 2002, the LLISC have met four times each year. There have been twelve meetings to date, with a final meeting scheduled for October 2005.

The LLISC terms of reference were aimed at improving Indigenous education by implementing the Learning Lessons recommendations, and guiding the management and implementation of the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2000 - 2004.

The terms of reference were as follows:

- [a] Report to the Minister for Education, Employment and Training on:
  - Progress made towards implementing Learning Lessons Review recommendations and the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan.
  - Achievement of improved Indigenous education outcomes.
- [b] Oversee implementation and evaluation of recommendations from the Learning Lessons Review.
- [c] Endorse Action Plans for implementing Review recommendations and the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan.
- [d] Consider and recommend on priorities for implementing recommendations according to the Committee's assessment of educational needs and resources available.
- [e] Consider and comment on reports provided by DEET and other education providers, and recommend on appropriate actions.
- [f] Seek to source additional funding required for implementing Review recommendations.
- [g] Monitor the Commonwealth funded Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program (IESIP) and National Indigenous Education Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NIELNS) initiatives to ensure they contribute to implementing Review recommendations and the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan.

In 2002 a Learning Lessons Implementation Branch (LLIB) was established in DEET's Indigenous Education Division as a resource for the LLISC. The LLIB provided a secretariat function for the committee in addition to its role as project manager for the coordination of Learning Lessons implementation.

The work required to implement Learning Lessons recommendations was extensive in its scope and breadth. Not only were there 151 recommendations requiring action, the recommendations were complex and far reaching. As this report demonstrates, at the end of four years, there have been significant changes to the way in which Indigenous education is approached and managed in the Northern Territory. While

---

<sup>2</sup> The Indigenous Education Division was the Indigenous Education Branch in 2000

<sup>3</sup> LLISC member list at Appendix 1

there is still much more work ahead, and while the performance of Indigenous students still falls behind that of non-Indigenous students, the implementation of Learning Lessons has made some small progress to arrest this trend. Improving Indigenous education is a long term investment requiring systemic change at all levels of the education process. There will be no quick fixes for Indigenous education, as evidenced by the relatively small improvements that have resulted from Learning Lessons implementation so far.

## **SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION ACTION**

---

Learning Lessons has been one of the most high profile and often quoted reports commissioned by the Northern Territory government in recent times. As the first comprehensive report on Indigenous education in the Northern Territory, it influenced Indigenous education policy, practice and approaches in both urban and remote communities. Importantly, the review changed DEET's approach to Indigenous education. The review made clear that all people engaged in education should strive for Indigenous education outcomes commensurate with the outcomes for non-Indigenous students. The review emphasised that it was time to stop glossing over and underreporting the poor outcomes of Indigenous student performance. Information needed to be accurately measured, monitored and reported, so that the work to improve Indigenous outcomes could be appropriately targeted.

One of the consequences of the review was to begin to establish Indigenous education as core business for DEET. Previous to the review, Indigenous education was a component of departmental business; hived off in its own branch and separate from the broader functioning of the department. Making Indigenous education the responsibility of all branches and divisions of DEET was an acknowledgement of its importance and prominence. While Learning Lessons was the impetus for this broadened focus, it was also timely, given that since 2000, nearly forty percent of students in Northern Territory government schools are Indigenous, and Indigenous enrolments have been increasing over time.

The Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2000 - 2004 was the key instrument to implement the Learning Lessons recommendations and five system-wide strategies were formulated to maximise Indigenous student school access, attendance and educational performance. The strategies were also the means by which DEET could monitor, assess and improve its own performance. The strategies articulated a strategic vision and a plan for action for each division and branch and include: (a) Student Enrolment, Attendance and Retention; (b) Secondary Indigenous Education; (c) Staff Recruitment and Retention; (d) Literacy and Numeracy; and later (e) the Employment and Training Strategy. While these strategies create a framework to improve Indigenous education across a range of important areas, the continuing limitations of existing education infrastructure in remote communities have in turn limited the provision of educational options for Indigenous students in these locations.

In order to appropriately support the existing strategies, DEET has put in place effective administrative management systems, including data management systems, and school reporting protocols. By way of example, in 1999, DEET was not able to accurately assess student numbers, let alone student progress. In 2005, DEET has sophisticated data management systems to record student enrolment, attendance and performance. In addition, DEET has a comprehensive curriculum framework for

Transition through to Year 10, and curriculum resource materials available electronically to teachers across the Northern Territory. Every teacher has been provided with a laptop to enable access to information and technologies that are shaping education. These systems and resources are one step towards ensuring that remote communities, and therefore Indigenous students, are not disadvantaged by reduced access to Information Technology Communication (ICT).

## **WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?**

---

It is a significant achievement, that of the 151 recommendations, 82 have been completed and implemented and 51 recommendations are partially implemented with ongoing action. Seventeen recommendations have been superseded by new policy or legislation that has made redundant the original recommendation. There is one recommendation that has not had any government action. A full table of the implementation status of each of the Learning Lessons recommendations is at Appendix 2.

It is important to note that a number of Learning Lessons recommendations will be ongoing. For example, the development of infrastructure is a continuing task for DEET as is the development of relationships with relevant Indigenous agencies. Many of the recommendations do not have an end point. DEET has a task to continuously communicate and create educational partnerships with families and carers. The task to support the training and development of new generations of Indigenous teachers will be ongoing. New non-Indigenous teachers will also need training and development to understand the educational context of the Northern Territory.

In addition to implementing the recommendations of Learning Lessons, the committee made 212 of its own recommendations, 46 to the Minister for Employment Education and Training, The Hon Syd Stirling, 69 recommendations to DEET, and 97 recommendations to the committee secretariat. These recommendations were an important adjunct to the Learning Lessons recommendations. Of the 212 recommendations, 204 were implemented. A table of the implementation status of the LLISC recommendations is at Chart 12 of this report.

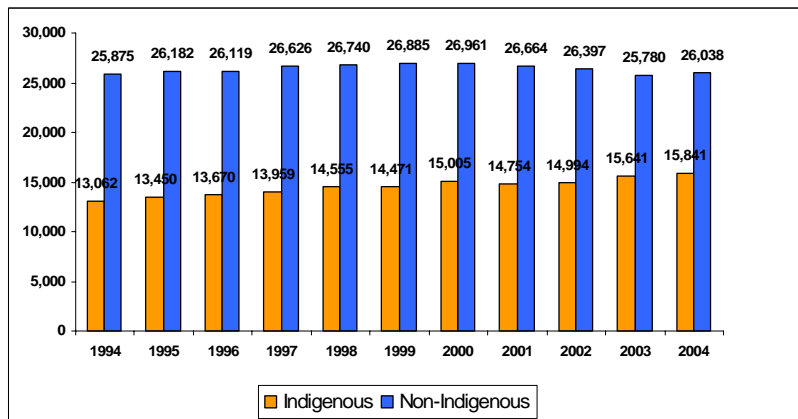
The implementation of Learning Lessons has been one of the biggest single initiatives for DEET over the past four years. While it is difficult to represent the sheer scale of work that has occurred during this time, it is possible to demonstrate that there have been incremental improvements in some Indigenous education outcomes. While these achievements are small, they demonstrate that sustained effort will see improvement in Indigenous education outcomes. Nonetheless, the challenge continues to be significant. For example, in remote NT the MAP test results of Indigenous students are markedly lower than for students, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, in all other locations. There is a strong correlation between relative remoteness and student achievement of the MAP test benchmark level.

In order to attain educational outcomes for Indigenous students commensurate with non-Indigenous students, a quantum shift is required, both in terms of effort from DEET, and effort from Indigenous communities. Indigenous students continue to fall way behind their peers on every educational indicator, with the exception of knowledge of their own languages and culture. Therefore the achievements of the

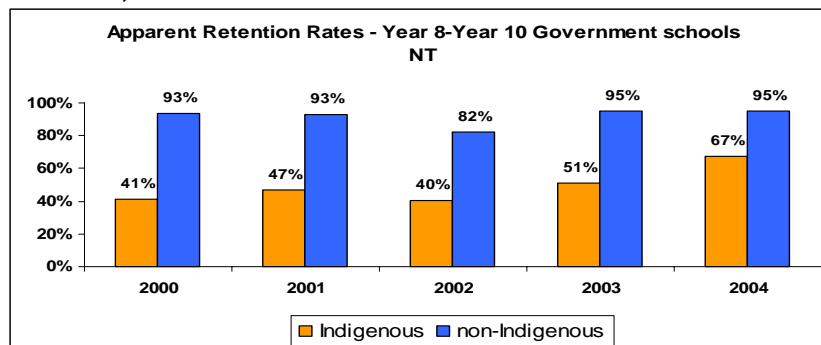
Learning Lessons implementation phase mark only a beginning point. The challenge is not over.

The following charts demonstrate what has occurred in the past four years. Since 2000 there have been increases in overall Indigenous student enrolments as well as increases in the retention rates of Indigenous students in government secondary schools. Charts 1, 2, and 3 demonstrate these rates.

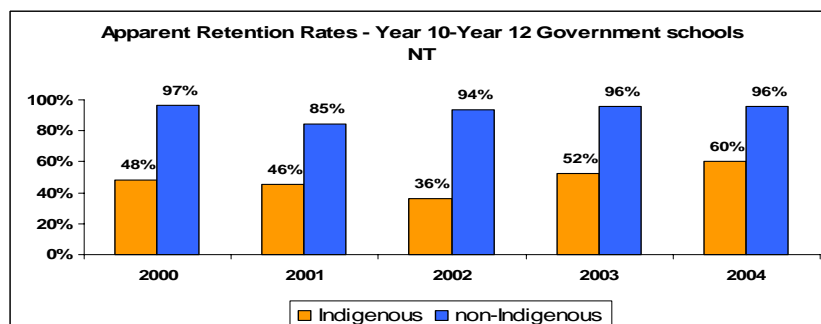
**CHART 1: INDIGENOUS STUDENT ENROLMENTS IN NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS, 1994 - 2004**



**CHART 2: APPARENT RETENTION RATES FROM YEAR 8 TO YEAR 10 IN NT GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS, 2000 – 2004.**

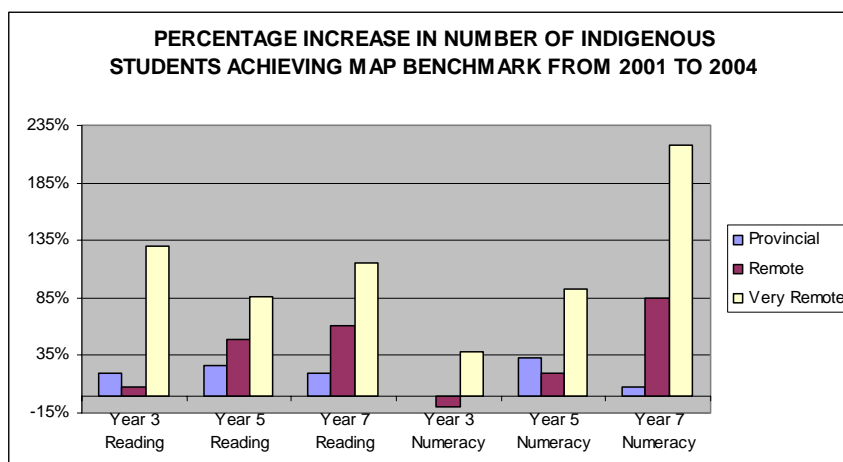


**CHART 3: APPARENT RETENTION RATES FROM YEAR 10 TO YEAR 12 IN NT GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS, 2000 – 2004.**



In addition to school retention, in 2004 there is evidence of increases in the percentage of remote Indigenous students achieving reading and numeracy benchmark since 2001, especially in very remote locations. Percentage increases since 2001 are demonstrated in Chart 4.

**CHART 4: PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN INDIGENOUS STUDENT NUMBERS REACHING READING AND NUMERACY BENCHMARK IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS BY LOCATION, 2004 ACTUALS COMPARED WITH 2001 ACTUALS**



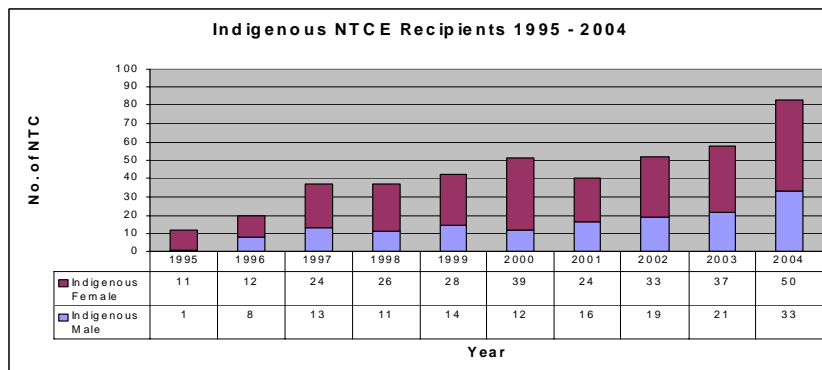
While these results are encouraging, it is important to note that the actual number of students achieving benchmark in these locations is relatively low, and it declines almost parallel with the relative remoteness of the student cohort. For example, only 69 out of a possible 613 Year 3 students achieved reading benchmark in very remote locations of the Northern Territory. This is 11 percent of the cohort. See Chart 5 below for more information.

**CHART 5: NUMBER OF INDIGENOUS STUDENTS ACHIEVING 2004 MAP BENCHMARK AGAINST NUMBER OF STUDENT ENROLMENTS**

2004 MAP Test	Geo-location	Number of Indigenous Achieving Benchmark	Number of Indigenous Students Enrolled
Year 3 Reading	Provincial	123	215
	Remote	84	208
	Very Remote	69	613
Year 5 Reading	Provincial	167	268
	Remote	98	265
	Very Remote	89	555
Year 7 Reading	Provincial	128	201
	Remote	69	215
	Very Remote	69	557
Year 3 Numeracy	Provincial	167	215
	Remote	131	208
	Very Remote	216	613
Year 5 Numeracy	Provincial	162	268
	Remote	93	265
	Very Remote	77	555
Year 7 Numeracy	Provincial	100	201
	Remote	63	215
	Very Remote	35	557

In recent years there have been overall improvements in the number of students completing Northern Territory Certificate of Education (NTCE) as demonstrated in Chart 6.

**CHART 6: NUMBER OF INDIGENOUS STUDENTS AWARDED THE NTCE IN ALL NORTHERN TERRITORY SCHOOLS, GOVERNMENT, CATHOLIC AND INDEPENDENT, BY GENDER, 1995 - 2004**



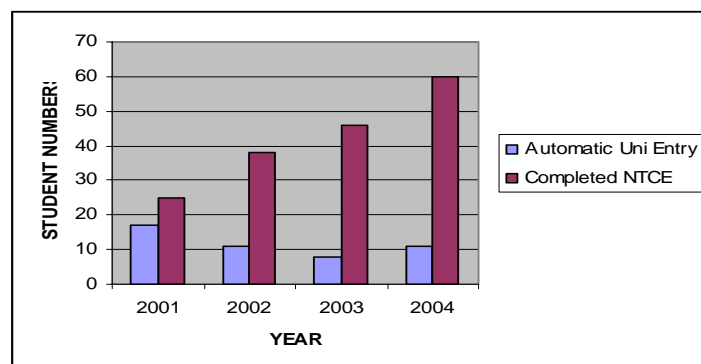
The increase in achievement by Indigenous students has been marked, especially in comparison with non-Indigenous students. Nevertheless, as Indigenous students constitute approximately 38 percent of the government school population, they are not proportionally represented in the numbers in Chart 7.

**CHART 7: GOVERNMENT SCHOOL STUDENTS ACHIEVING THE NTCE 2001 – 2004**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	%increase 2001-2004
Indigenous	25	38	46	60	140%
Non-Indigenous	584	600	579	606	4%

Interestingly, while more students are completing NTCE over time, fewer are achieving a Tertiary Entrance Rating (TER) of 60 or above, earning automatic entrance into Charles Darwin University. It is a continuing challenge for educators to support Indigenous students to achieve TER scores that lead to automatic university entrance as demonstrated in Chart 8.

**CHART 8: INDIGENOUS GOVERNMENT SCHOOL STUDENTS ACHIEVING THE NTCE AND OBTAINING AUTOMATIC ENTRY TO CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY 2001 – 2004**



In 2004, of the students who completed the NTCE, 34 percent or 28 Indigenous students, and 16 percent or 122 non-Indigenous students did not achieve a TER.

Eighteen percent or 15 Indigenous students and 48 percent or 372 non-Indigenous students were eligible to apply for entrance to the Charles Darwin University with a TER of 60 or higher.

Indigenous students are enrolling in vocational education in increasing numbers, especially in the remote regions of the Northern Territory. Chart 9 demonstrates the increases in school VET courses. These courses lead to post secondary vocational education.

**CHART 9: VET IN SCHOOL INDIGENOUS STUDENT ENROLMENTS BY GENDER AND LOCATION, 2000 - 2004**

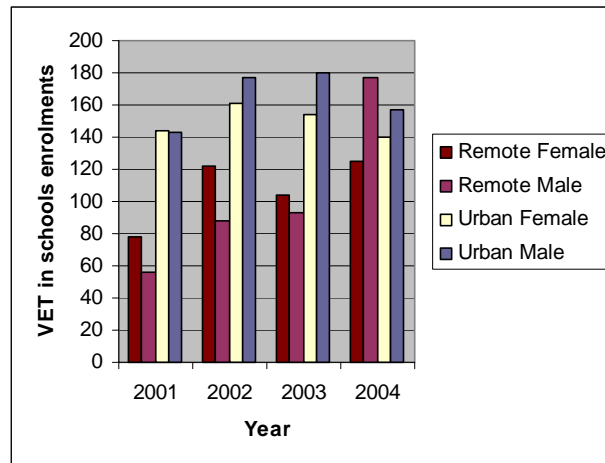
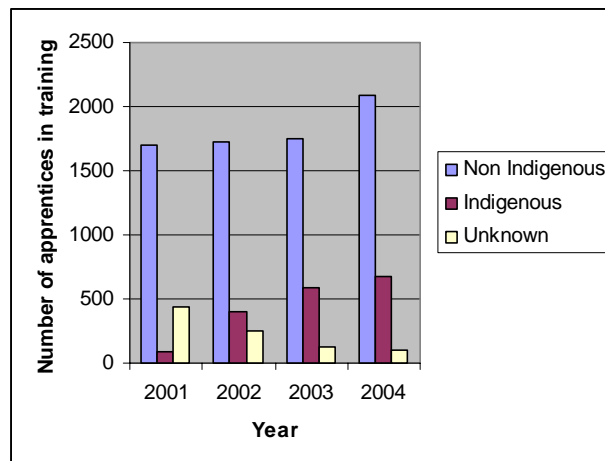


Chart 10 demonstrates the numbers of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in apprenticeship training. There are upward trends for both male and female Indigenous apprentices from 2001 to 2004.

**CHART 10: APPRENTICES IN TRAINING IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY BY INDIGENOUS, NON-INDIGENOUS OR UNKNOWN, 2001 - 2004**



While there are still challenges to improve Indigenous education, data demonstrate a trend of increasing Indigenous student participation in education options as well as improving academic results.

## REPORT STRUCTURE

---

This report will outline the specific actions that have occurred as a result of the Learning Lessons recommendations under the same chapter headings as Learning Lessons. Student outcome data will be provided in relevant sections where the data demonstrate the impact of initiatives. Where required, some sections of this report will contain suggested recommendations about the way forward for Indigenous education, by describing outstanding work and a future role or task for the Northern Territory Indigenous Education Council. The chapter headings are:

- Introduction
- Educational Outcomes
- Management Systems
- Funding and Costs
- School Facilities and Infrastructure
- Staffing
- Access and Provision
- Language and Literacy Acquisition
- Attendance and Participation
- Data Deficiencies
- Community Partnerships

## SECTION II THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNING LESSONS RECOMMENDATIONS

# Chapter 1

## Introduction: Recommendations 1 – 2

**REC 1: in order to be inclusive of all Indigenous Australians, the Aboriginal Education Branch be renamed the Indigenous Education Branch, consistent with the new peak body, the Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory.**

**REC 2: the term 'Indigenous' should be used in all instances to inclusively reflect both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.**

The first two recommendations of Learning Lessons occur in the introductory section of the review and they focus on consistent use of terminology.

DEET's first action in response to Learning Lessons was to change the name of the Aboriginal Education Branch to the Indigenous Education Branch. 'Indigenous' is now the term that is used to describe Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Northern Territory. It is both DEET policy and practice.

### SUMMARY

Recommendation numbers	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
1-2				2

There is no future action required for these recommendations.

# Chapter 2

## Educational outcomes: Recommendations 3 – 13

**REC 3: the Multilevel Assessment Program (MAP) tests be retained.**

**REC 4: effort is made to provide professional development programs to teachers to support their understanding of the different purposes of testing and assessment.**

**REC 5: NTDE develops means of making feedback of the results of MAP data meaningful and accessible to Indigenous parents, in line with their clearly stated interest in comparative information.**

**REC 6: an information strategy is implemented to ensure the national benchmarking process is clearly explained to parents and school-based staff.**

**REC 7: work is commenced immediately on the school council reports of MAP results to replace the dense introductory text with understandable information, to ensure that the results stand out clearly and are meaningfully represented, and to provide clear explanations of what the profile levels are meant to mean.**

**REC 8: the revised MAP reporting format for school councils is tested with Indigenous people in remote areas for clarity and accessibility.**

**REC 9: schools explore alternative models of communicating student progress to parents, noting the good practice examples that already exist in schools.**

**REC 10: NTDE issues a clear statement establishing the reasonable expectations for a student being tested in a language in which the student has limited proficiency when ESL students should be expected to be ready to undertake the same assessments as first-language English speakers whether it is possible to establish common benchmarks for ESL and first-language English speakers and test for these.**

**REC 11: ESL profiles are mandated for use by teachers as a means of both mapping and ensuring the progress of identified ESL students.**

**REC 12: NTDE urgently evaluates the mandating of mathematics and English profiles for remote area Indigenous students in the light of the Curriculum Review Recommendation 38 and provides clear direction for schools on their use.**

**REC 13: secondary schools ensure that parents are given accessible, meaningful and relevant information on the educational progress of their children and the course options available.**

The *Educational Outcomes* section of Learning Lessons emphasised a requirement for Northern Territory schools to accurately assess and report Indigenous student educational performance to parents and school councils. In addition to testing, this section described a need to benchmark student performance against clearly understood standards. In order to make this information meaningful to parents, communities and teachers, a campaign of information and professional learning was recommended.

As Learning Lessons pointed out, prior to 1999, there were almost no accurate records of Indigenous student performance, and no comparison of Indigenous student performance with national or Northern Territory standards. As a result,

students, parents and community members had unrealistic expectations of the capabilities of the students.

DEET has addressed the issue of accurate testing and recording of Indigenous student results. Both individual Indigenous student performance and school performance can now be tracked and mapped over time. The Multi-level Assessment Program (MAP) is now well established in Northern Territory schools. This is the benchmark test report. MAP is mandatory for all students in Years 3, 5 and 7. Since 2000, Northern Territory schools have increased their efforts to prepare and encourage Indigenous students to participate in MAP testing. Schools have familiarised students with the test format and requirements. Indigenous students across the Northern Territory are sitting the MAP tests in increasing numbers.

The following Chart 11 demonstrates an increase in MAP participation for Indigenous students. This increase is especially remarkable from 2001 to 2002 for the MAP reading test where participant rates more than doubled for Year 3, and increased by 39 percent at Year 5 and 26 percent at Year 7. While MAP is now mandated, these numbers are still low when compared with Indigenous population data.

**CHART 11: INDIGENOUS STUDENT PARTICIPANTS IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOL MAP TESTS, 2001 – 2004**

YEAR	2001	2002	2003	2004
READING YEAR 3	343	819	758	702
READING YEAR 5	480	785	800	819
READING YEAR 7	479	646	673	741
NUMERACY YEAR 3	797	913	871	826
NUMERACY YEAR 5	794	794	854	908
NUMERACY YEAR 7	638	679	686	774

At the school level, teachers of Indigenous students participated in MAP test development panels to ensure that the tests were not biased and were developed in a way which is sensitive to cultural and ESL considerations. Northern Territory teachers have been provided with professional learning about MAP, and as the MAP tests are closely aligned with the NT Curriculum Framework, teachers have familiarity with the test content. DEET MAP reports to school councils have been simplified and clarified to provide comprehensible information about each school's performance.

DEET has taken steps to inform Indigenous parents about the importance of MAP testing and national benchmarking. Parents are provided with MAP information at the beginning of Term 3 every year, as well as the dates for MAP. Student reports contain information about MAP and each child's performance against national benchmarks. The NT Curriculum Framework (NTCF) recommends and endorses a wide range of methods of reporting student achievement information to parents and carers. Report formats are developed in conjunction with the community so that they are understood in each locality. Examples of high quality reporting methods are included in the NTCF and on the DEET website.

The eTool rollout and training commenced in Term 4 2003. Teachers can generate student reports with the eTool that are detailed and include visual representations of student progress. Schools are reporting against the band levels of the NTCF. This means that student progress can be monitored and tracked over time. The eTool

allows schools to store digital proofs of this information. In addition, the Ten Two-Way Learning schools continue to report against first language Literacy, ESL and Numeracy attainment.

In 2002 and 2004, DEET sought feedback from school councils to ensure that they understood the MAP tests and results. Feedback to DEET about the suitability of the reports occurred through the Portfolio Principal forums, cluster meetings and individual school visits. In the Arnhem region, the Making MAP Meaningful Project has assisted schools to engage with the MAP test process. Successful elements of this project have been extended throughout remote Northern Territory schools.

In order to improve information about educational options for secondary aged students and their parents and carers, DEET is providing qualified counsellors and careers advisers to all secondary schools. The *Secondary Indigenous Students Retention Project* includes a focus on individual counselling and case management from Year 9 to Year 10. Schools will adopt a mentor and case management approach for all Indigenous students in Years 11 and 12. An essential aspect of this is the provision of clear pathways to the attainment of the NTCE or to employment or further training. Plans also include strategic and creative approaches to engage and involve students, parents and organisations from outside the school community.

## SUMMARY

Recommendation numbers	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
3-13	0	0	0	11

DEET has implemented all recommendations contained in *Education Outcomes*. DEET has mandated student participation in the MAP tests, and therefore ensured an information source from which to assess the educational levels of students across the Northern Territory. The increase in Indigenous student participation rates in the MAP tests are an indication that these recommendations have been successfully implemented.

DEET has taken steps to inform Indigenous parents and community members about MAP tests and the meaning of benchmarks, and this work is ongoing. DEET plans to continue to talk with communities about educational approaches, reciprocal responsibilities and expectations with regard to student performance.

### Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008

*The Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008* outlines future action, under priority action 4 to continue the work of communicating educational expectations with Indigenous communities:

#### Stakeholder Agreements and Partnerships

*Priority Action 4: Develop Local School and Community Charters for the larger remote centres to help the Indigenous community and school work closer together*

# Chapter 3

## Management systems: Recommendations 14 – 25

**REC 14:** school annual reports be the key mechanism for the school's accountability within the system.

**REC 15:** school annual reports have a relentless focus on student outcomes.

**REC 16:** NTDE ensures these annual reports are responded to by senior management with critical analysis, both positive and negative, of the school's performance.

**REC 17:** NTDE ensures there is an unequivocal outcomes-based approach applied across the whole of Indigenous education supported by objective assessment using agreed system-wide benchmarks.

**REC 18:** schools and principals increase their efforts to use the data to explain to parents and children consequences of educational decisions made on their behalf.

**REC 19:** NTDE harnesses the advancing wave of communications capacity coming with the new communications systems and services to network all schools including major remote sites.

**REC 20:** NTDE integrates the implementation and support of remote communications and desktop service provision to schools with other Northern Territory Government (NTG) agencies, e.g. Territory Health Services (THS), Police, Department of Corporate and Information Services (DCIS) and local councils and the community.

**REC 21:** NTDE implements a comprehensive student tracking system allowing Indigenous students to be traced through the system and ensure their achievements are recorded.

**REC 22:** NTDE investigates the opportunities to share the client tracking systems developed by THS for its community health systems and the Education Department of Western Australia.

**REC 23:** NTDE ensures that any new resource management systems satisfy the basic outcome data requirements to track outcomes for Indigenous students and be scaled to allow remote schools with minimal technical and administrative support to be full players.

**REC 24:** NTDE works closely with Northern Territory University (NTU), Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) and other training organisations to ensure that all teachers have a minimum level of computer literacy and related teaching competencies.

**REC 25:** NTDE institutes and resources dedicated cross-program project teams to share resources with other NTG agencies and harness Federal Government funding in partnership with Indigenous management to improve access to information technology & telecommunication (IT & T) systems in remote areas.

As part of the implementation of Learning Lessons review, the corporate areas of DEET, schools and training providers set up management systems that allow them to collect, collate, analyse and report data about school and student performance over time. This data is now used to evaluate the performance of students, schools and of the corporate DEET. It is through the analysis of information at the system level, that the entire organisation is able to determine whether it is achieving its objectives. As described in Learning Lessons, there is a 'duty of disclosure' for schools and for the corporate DEET.

Learning Lessons recommends that Northern Territory schools report their progress through the school annual report, and that DEET provide feedback to schools by way of analysis of the school's progress. DEET's school Accountability Framework requires all schools to follow annual reporting guidelines. These guidelines require schools to provide and analyse their own MAP data in their annual reports. Schools are required to take account of their student literacy and numeracy performance. Schools are required to identify projects and initiatives that contribute to progress in the following key areas:

- Increasing enrolment, attendance and retention of Indigenous students
- Improving Indigenous students' health and well-being
- Improving Indigenous students' literacy and numeracy outcomes
- Increasing the number, level and skills of Indigenous staff
- Ensuring that the curriculum and learning environment supports and is inclusive of Indigenous language and culture
- Engagement with and involvement of Indigenous students' families and communities

This process ensures that schools have the ability to analyse their performance as educators. It ensures a process of self-scrutiny and school accountability.

DEET senior management provide feedback to schools highlighting the school's performance. DEET is also developing an internal moderation group to provide detailed, constructive feedback on the quality of the school's reports. Information technology systems are now the essential tools through which schools and DEET maintain communication, provide feedback and undertake various reporting functions.

At the time of writing Learning Lessons there was limited information technology (IT) and telecommunications to facilitate communication between DEET and schools. The recommendations of the *Management Systems* chapter of the review emphasise the need to supply IT infrastructure to schools and for DEET to develop information management systems to track and record Indigenous student educational performance.

DEET has made significant advances in designing and implementing information management systems since 1999. Information systems have been transformed from a point where there was almost no capacity to assess student numbers let alone student progress, to a point where individual student progress can be tracked over time against the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework. This has been a significant achievement for Indigenous education. It has meant that information can follow the student, regardless of his or her location. Given the high mobility of Indigenous students, the Northern Territory student tracking systems increasingly provide teachers with information that allows them to see what students have covered in the curriculum (NTCF) in addition to each student's reading, writing and numeracy levels.

Despite the challenges of remoteness and isolation that characterise the Northern Territory, DEET is working to ensure that all schools have access to technology. All NT schools now have a common server infrastructure, workstations and 10/100Mbs switched Local Area Network Systems. The Territory Education Network connects all schools and provides an extensive range of teacher-and student-centred online services including broadband Internet. A fundamental tenet of the technology rollout was to ensure equity in access; this has been achieved by ensuring all NT schools

have access to the same level of resources both within the school and in the education network.

Student enrolment, attendance and tracking are achieved through the Student Administration and Management System (SAMS), installed in all NT Government schools in 2003. In 2004 Centris was added to assist in the management and tracking of student information. Centris will work in conjunction with SAMS to allow tracking of students between schools. This information will be combined with student outcome data from MAP. While Centris is in its early stages, by 2006 it should be possible to track the attendance and enrolment of all Northern Territory government school students.

DEET is currently rolling out the electronic Curriculum Management tool known as the Curriculum eTool, which provides teachers with curriculum frameworks and materials in an electronic format. This tool enables teachers to track students' progress through the curriculum, and will assist planning and programming. The eTool has now been rolled out to 45 schools with further rollout underway.

In order to optimise all ICT possibilities, DEET is working with other NT agencies to identify opportunities to share resources and to problem-solve. DEET is a member of the Remote Telecommunications Forum, the Centre of Excellence in Remote Telecommunications Solutions, and the Remote Workforce Working Group. DEET is also working with the Australian Government, and has made a successful submission to the National Communications Fund for Interactive Distance Learning.

## SUMMARY

Recommendation numbers	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
14 - 25	2		3	7

Overall, DEET has made significant progress in ensuring school accountability through reporting mechanisms and processes. Progress has been made in terms of accountability systems such as the annual reporting process as well as the development of technology to transmit these reports. The provision of technology to Northern Territory schools is a significant achievement given the challenges of overcoming the barriers of remoteness, and the general lack of ICT infrastructure in this jurisdiction. This work continues, with further work to improve school reporting systems.

### Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008

School and system reporting will continue through the impact framework of the *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008*. The impact framework ensures that DEET will continue to measure the impact of education approaches on Indigenous student educational outcomes.

#### Impact Framework

*Priority Action 13: Develop school and community data profiles to inform school and corporate planning*

*Priority Action 14: Introduce a research and evaluation framework to address knowledge gaps and provide an evidence base to determine 'what works'*

# Chapter 4

## Funding and costs:

### Recommendations 26 - 40

**REC 26:** the NTDE Indigenous Education Strategies Initiatives Program (IESIP) Review team clarify which IESIP funds are being used as substitute funding.

**REC 27:** future allocations under IESIP or equivalent funding programs are used as top-up to address the huge gap in outcomes after NTDE funds have been distributed fairly on a per capita basis and weighted for needs.

**REC 28:** the current system of thirty-two managers for IESIP programs be immediately discontinued and replaced with coordination of the NTDE IESIP program being the responsibility of the Aboriginal Education Branch.

**REC 29:** IESIP initiatives clearly demonstrate their contribution to the enhancement of educational outcomes for Indigenous students.

**REC 30:** the revised IESIP programs have a clear focus on attendance, English oracy, literacy and numeracy.

**REC 31:** as a matter of urgency, a submission to Treasury is made to reduce the on-cost component of employing people under the IESIP.

**REC 32:** the savings are directed into targeted programs for Indigenous education in schools.

**REC 33:** NTDE and Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) renegotiate the strategies and reporting requirements for IESIP in line with meeting the key recommendations of this review.

**REC 34:** NTDE work with DETYA and Centrelink to clarify the nature of the Abstudy Program.

**REC 35:** NTDE institutes financial management systems and processes to allow accurate measurement of the resource inputs and requirements at a region, school, subject, program and ultimately student level.

**REC 36:** branch directors, principals and all senior managers are trained to be competent in comprehending, analysing and acting upon such financial management and resource information.

**REC 37:** NTDE senior management review regular management reports on staff turnover, relief provision, and other areas of resource loss and require all managers as part of their performance appraisal to commit to percentage improvements in these areas.

**REC 38:** NTDE ensures that the management reporting systems that are put in place are pragmatic and driven by a benefits orientation and meet the business and information needs of managers within schools.

**REC 39:** NTDE seeks agreement from the Commonwealth to allocate funding on the basis of need, not category.

**REC 40:** NTDE, as part of a whole-of-government effort, uses a measure such as the Griffith Service Access Frame (GSAF) in all negotiations with the Commonwealth.

The first eight recommendations of this [Learning Lessons](#) chapter are directed to the Australian Government's Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program (IESIP). IESIP supplementary funding is aimed at implementing MCEETYA's eight key priority areas: English literacy skills; numeracy skills; employment of Indigenous teachers

and other staff; enrolment, attendance and retention through to Year 12; NTCE completions; involvement of Indigenous Australians in the education decision-making processes; professional development of Indigenous staff; and increasing the culturally inclusive nature of education. Learning Lessons found that the administration and management of IESIP funds was inefficient and ineffective.

DEET has taken action to ensure that IESIP funds are distributed equitably to the areas of greatest need. Since 2003, IESIP funds have been distributed on a per-capita basis, with weighting for remote and regional areas as determined by the ABS Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage and the Accessibility Remoteness Index of Australia formula.<sup>4</sup>

A small team in the Indigenous Education Division now manages IESIP and ensures that all IESIP-funded projects are focused on achieving outcomes in the eight priority areas established by MCEETYA. IESIP on-costs are no longer deducted from IESIP funds. The savings remain with the DEET IESIP budget and as a consequence this allows funding to be directed to program delivery.

The remaining recommendations in this section are concerned with tracking the costs of delivering Indigenous education. Part of the challenge for DEET was to improve the financial skill levels of DEET across the agency and across schools. Cost tracking is important for all DEET branches, divisions and schools. Work has been occurring to this end. For example, DEET staff were provided with information sessions about accrual accounting when it was introduced in 2002-03. MYOB training is provided to principals, registrars and school assistants. Financial Services Division staff meet with senior DEET managers to discuss financial management such as procurement and financial reporting as required. This training and development of DEET staff in financial matters is ongoing. DEET is now able to monitor the costs of education by school and by region.

An important issue for cost-tracking is the management of the workforce. Staff turnover is a major cost in education, both in financial and educational terms. This is a challenge for remote Northern Territory schools in particular, as the majority of teachers do not commit for long periods of time. One way to mitigate this disadvantage is to understand its patterns and to compensate for any shortfall. DEET now monitors staff turnover via a new HR Management system. This system provides regular workforce reports to senior management. DEET is increasingly set up to undertake careful workforce planning. DEET will soon be in a position to compare schools, and determine which schools have continuing recruitment and retention difficulties. This information will ensure that initiatives and resources are directed where they are most needed.

## SUMMARY

Recommendation numbers	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
26 - 40	1		2	12

Overall, there have been significant improvements to the administration of Indigenous education funding and resources. Australian Government Indigenous

<sup>4</sup> CAP and SAISO funds are also distributed using these formulas.

education funding formula have been revised so that money is directed to schools based on need and relative access to resources. There is ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure that all funds are targeted to achieve the MCEETYA outcomes. In addition, there has been improvement to the financial skills and knowledge of DEET staff through a range of training programs.

DEET also continues to work to improve recruitment and retention of teachers in remote schools using the Internet as a means to publish information about teaching in the Northern Territory as well as publicising teaching vacancies.

### **Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008**

The *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008* will continue, through priority action 8, to focus on the development of an appropriate and highly skilled workforce:

#### **Leadership and Workforce Development**

*Priority Action 8: Develop and implement policy and procedures that will strengthen the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers in remote schools, particularly in areas such as:*

- *identifying the essential skills teachers need to successfully teach Indigenous students*
- *preparing and supporting teachers living and teaching in a remote locality*
- *providing attractive conditions of service, in particular incentives that encourage longer stays at one school*
- *encouraging greater local Indigenous teacher recruitment*

# Chapter 5

## School facilities and infrastructure: Recommendations 41 - 51

**REC 41:** the processes for repairs and maintenance are streamlined, with more discretion given to the principals to have items fixed on the spot.

**REC 42:** comprehensive effort is made to bring all schools to an acceptable standard with the subsequent repairs and maintenance allocation to schools calculated as a percentage of the total asset value, ensuring that this does not disadvantage poorly equipped schools.

**REC 43:** the Building Assets Maintenance Schedule (BAMS) priorities for repairs and maintenance are developed in consultation with principals, are related to action plans for school improvement and closely followed by comprehensive action.

**REC 44:** in recognition that principals are not usually skilled maintenance supervisors and a centralised approach to small-scale remote locality issues is unworkable, that community-based agencies are considered as the preferred maintenance providers where quality and cost-effectiveness can be assured. An additional benefit of this approach is enhancement of community self-management and increased capacity to offer ongoing employment opportunities at the local level.

**REC 45:** NTDE develops a strategic plan for infrastructure incorporating the key goals of this review. This would encompass

- school plans and community commitments to increasing attendance
- anticipating the planning recommended (under ‘Access and provision’) for secondary provisions and multipurpose early childhood centres
- a rolling program to ensure that over the next five years, all school facilities will be brought to an agreed standard
- disability and health needs being integrated within the designs
- that new facilities in their design encompass the goals of having education as a lifetime resource for all age groups, and are places that are welcoming to all community members.

**REC 46:** existing areas of chronic teacher housing shortfall are redressed as a matter of urgency.

**REC 47:** remote area housing is brought to an accepted level of amenity.

**REC 48:** Cabinet Decision 2454 is amended to allow the staggered introduction of teacher housing in remote areas for local recruits who have full teaching qualifications.

**REC 49:** pursuant to the Northern Territory Government’s interest in Indigenous professional development and greater community level responsibility for service delivery, Cabinet Decision 2454 is considered to apply to local recruits from other agencies, especially Northern Territory Police and Territory Health Services, where those recruits have appropriate qualifications. That is, consideration should be given to supplying government housing to qualified local Indigenous police officers, nurses and doctors under negotiated arrangements with the appropriate community agencies.

**REC 50:** the Government concern that such a strategy will increase the expectations of other local public sector employees in remote communities is addressed with a public information strategy which clearly explains the rationale and eligibility criteria.

**REC 51:** in view of the high costs involved, negotiation with the Commonwealth is essential.

The provision of school buildings and facilities and teacher housing in remote locations is an important issue that can impact on student learning and on staff

retention. In addition to the provision of infrastructure, maintenance of facilities is also an expensive and time consuming requirement in remote regions.

In terms of building maintenance, schools receive an annual budget of \$15 000, which is managed locally. If additional maintenance funds are required, they are sought through a submission process.

Overall, DEET expenditure on repair and maintenance increased by approximately \$5 million during the period 2001 to 2005. During 2002-03 DEET actual expenditure was \$20.267 million, at three percent of the total asset value of \$652 million. This is above the benchmark standard of two percent. Similarly, during 2003-04, expenditure was \$22.442 million and the total asset value was \$626 million. This was four percent expenditure against the total asset value and double the benchmark standard.

It is nevertheless unclear what proportion of historical expenditure relates to remote repairs and maintenance as the reporting system managed by Department of Infrastructure and Planning does not differentiate between remote and urban expenditure on this aspect of the works program.

The cost to bring all Northern Territory school facilities to the recommended standard is beyond the resources and current capacity of government. Upgrades of existing facilities and infrastructure can only be slow and incremental. The cost to bring current school buildings and facilities up to benchmark standard, without addressing the need for new facilities, is estimated to be \$360 million. This equates to \$72 million per annum over a five-year period or approximately 13 percent of the DEET total annual budget.

The Northern Territory Secondary Review estimates there are approximately 3,500 school-aged people not enrolled in school. Given that every 22 additional enrolments in a remote community require a new classroom, an additional teacher and a new teacher house, 22 enrolments would attract a cost of \$750,000. If DEET were to succeed in attracting all 3,500 students to school the resource and infrastructure cost would be approximately \$122 million.

In 2005 DEET will undertake a study of major asset planning that will result in the production of a facility plan for each Northern Territory government school. The study will identify the current condition of school buildings, the fitness of each facility for its purpose, and building modifications that are needed to attain a benchmark standard. The study will separate remote from urban assets.

In terms of new infrastructure, during the period 2002-05 the following new projects were either completed or are under construction. Maningrida Community Education Centre (CEC) has a new secondary facility constructed at a cost of \$1 million. Papunya CEC has a new secondary facility at \$0.917 million. Kalkaringi CEC has a new secondary facility at a cost of \$1.133 million, and Minyerri has a new secondary facility at a cost of \$1.066 million. Minyerri has a new ablution facility at a cost of \$0.19 million. Homeland centres Utopia, Mulga Bore and Alcoota have received new transportable classrooms at a cost of \$0.07 million.

Other works due for completion by the end of 2005-06 are a new homeland centre at Emu Point, and a new double classroom at Manyallaluk. Shepherdson CEC will receive a new secondary facility and Maningrida CEC will have stage 2 of the secondary building project completed.

Teacher housing is another important infrastructure priority for DEET. Currently the quality and the availability of teacher housing varies in remote communities. Some communities are extremely well resourced, while others have ongoing shortages. General Managers of Schools provide advice on priority needs. DEET then provides the Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport with a priority list of housing needs annually. Despite these processes, there is a backlog of communities requiring housing.

A rolling program of upgrading remote area housing commenced in 2001. In late 2002, Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport completed an assessment of all remote housing stock. A Cabinet Decision of December 2003 approved a new business model for the improved effectiveness and delivery of government employee housing services to approved standards. During August 2004, Cabinet endorsed a five year program to construct new dwellings, replace dwellings beyond economical repair and upgrade housing to the new standards commencing in 2004-05. During 2004-05, six teacher dwellings were upgraded in Elliot at a total cost of \$0.32 million.

During 2004-05, 24 new teacher dwellings were completed at a cost of \$5.36 million at Canteen Creek (1) \$0.196 million; Galiwinku (6) \$1.422 million; Maningrida (4) \$0.895 million; Pularumpi (1) \$0.19 million; Ramingining (4) \$0.951 million; Minyerri (3) \$0.524 million; Kintore (2) \$0.413 million; Palumpa (2) \$0.609 million; and Yarralin (1) \$0.163 million. During 2004-05, 5 teacher dwellings were replaced in the following remote communities at a total cost of \$1.1 million: Maningrida (4) \$0.9 million; and Palumpa (1) \$0.2 million.

Due to budget limitations, it is not possible to provide housing to all communities requiring new dwellings in any given year. There are communities with continuing teacher housing shortfalls. DEET has determined that 65 additional houses for teachers will be required over the next five years, 16 of which are included on Territory Housing's 2004-05 Capital Works program. Currently, 36 existing houses have been condemned, and of these 21 are scheduled to be replaced. In 2005-06 government has funded only one new house.

A significant issue for local trained Indigenous teachers is that under existing policy, they are not eligible for government subsidised housing. The Department of Chief Minister has the lead role in developing and seeking government approval for a new policy on housing local recruits. A submission on this is currently being considered. If housing is to be provided to local trained Indigenous teachers, this will require significant resources.

## SUMMARY

Recommendation numbers	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
41 - 51	1	1	7	2

Providing facilities for remote schools that are comparable with urban schools is a continuing challenge. While some remote communities have access to excellent educational facilities and teacher housing, the quality and availability of infrastructure in remote locations is variable. DEET's future asset planning will go some way to accurately assess relative requirements across the Northern Territory, however

without significant additional funds to build, replace and repair, progress in this area will be slow. Significant resources are required from both the Territory and the Australian Governments. Attempts have been made to address the reduced subject options of remote students by improving the quality of, and access to Interactive Distance Learning (IDL) technology and through a number of Building Better School initiatives.

### **Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008**

DEET continues to prioritise infrastructure through the *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008*:

#### **Access to Education**

*Priority Action 5: Expand the delivery of pre-school programs in remote Indigenous communities*

*Priority Action 6: Expand the delivery of relevant and accessible secondary education for secondary-ready Indigenous people, including a new model for distance learning*

*Priority Action 7: Develop and implement an enhanced strategic infrastructure plan for school assets and teacher housing in regional and remote communities*

### **SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATION FOR THE NORTHERN TERRITORY INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL**

Recommendation 48 is yet to receive action from the NT Government:

*Cabinet Decision 2454 is amended to allow the staggered introduction of teacher housing in remote areas for local recruits who have full teaching qualifications.*

There has been no NT Government approval for funding to introduce local recruit housing. This recommendation is not specifically covered in the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008.

The NTIEC may consider requesting information from DEET about the provision of housing for remote Indigenous recruits with full teaching qualifications.

The NTIEC may also consider advocating for improved school infrastructure in remote NT. There is scope for the NTIEC to advocate for a bilateral agreement on infrastructure between the NT and the Australian Governments.

# Chapter 6

## Staffing:

### Recommendations 52 – 79

**REC 52:** a comprehensive professional development program for principals is developed, and implemented, providing business management and public sector leadership training and addressing the separate needs of Indigenous principals and senior school staff.

**REC 53:** in conjunction with the Self-Managing Schools Program, principals be given control of notional staffing budgets by devolving funding to school councils to allow greater recruitment flexibility and community control.

**REC 54:** principal positions are advertised nationally to attract the widest field possible.

**REC 55:** a program is embarked on by NTDE to articulate to school principals the strategy of moving Indigenous Education to core business and to ensure this shift is actioned within schools.

**REC 56:** NTDE develops performance agreements with principals which build these departmental expectations into contractual arrangements, including minimally, requirements to improve Indigenous student attendance, learning outcomes and relationships with the community.

**REC 57:** the titles 'Head Teacher' and 'Teacher in Charge' be changed to 'Principal'.

**REC 58:** NTDE notes the successes within the Education Department of Western Australia and Territory Health Services in significantly reducing staff turnover, and learns from these and other such initiatives to establish a comprehensive recruitment and employment strategy which enables rigorous recruitment tied to performance outcomes.

**REC 59:** in the first instance the NTDE engages professional recruitment consultants to establish the recruitment criteria and processes required, and to assist with the design and development of the overall strategy.

**REC 60:** care is taken to avoid creating new categories of high staff turnover schools in regional areas not within defined categories of remoteness in determinations of hard-to-staff schools developed under the total recruitment strategy.

**REC 61:** NTDE exercises its power as a purchaser of services from tertiary institutions to specify the skills set required by the department for its schools and negotiate service-level agreements with Northern Territory University (NTU), the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) or other providers to meet the professional development and training needs of its staff.

**REC 62:** NTDE negotiates with the tertiary sector to increase the scope and adequacy of ESL training at the undergraduate level.

**REC 63:** NTDE orientation and cross-cultural training programs be reviewed urgently with a view to increasing the local area content and applicability of the information acquired, and to take account of relevant cross-departmental work and interstate initiatives.

**REC 64:** schools/clusters are allocated discretionary funds enabling employment of suitable local people to provide cross-cultural community induction.

**REC 65:** the option of outsourcing urban area cross-cultural training is investigated and that suitable training providers with an established track record be engaged to fulfil the mandated Northern Territory Public Service (NTPS) requirements to provide effective cross-cultural preparation.

**REC 66:** NTDE implements a strategic plan for staff development related to the requirements for improving Indigenous education across the board.

**REC 67:** NTDE develops and implements a strategy to achieve universal coverage in ESL methodologies for all teachers across all schooling types—early childhood through to secondary—within a period of five years.

**REC 68:** in the initial period, the department should precisely specify its particular ESL training requirements and establish a clear plan analysing the workforce and the current levels of training, specifying the different groups that need different levels of input, and determining how and when the gaps will be filled against performance targets.

**REC 69:** NTDE develops options for providing intensive short course training in ESL.

**REC 70:** NTDE develops and implements a strategy to vigorously pursue an increase in the number of Indigenous teachers and Indigenous people involved with schools in an official and paid capacity as the best long-term solution for addressing high teacher turnover and to support a major recommendation of this review to achieve the active involvement of Indigenous people in the control and delivery of their own education services.

**REC 71:** NTDE increases the proportion of Indigenous staff in senior non-school-based administrative positions.

**REC 72:** the para-professional role of the assistant teacher is explicitly recognised and supported with appropriate training.

**REC 73:** staffing formulas are revised to ensure that all remote area teachers share the same entitlements to assistant teachers; and to ensure an assistant teacher presence in secondary classes.

**REC 74:** the IESIP review fully evaluate the current allocation, mix and location of AIEW/ARO positions and that increased IESIP resources be directed toward this program in 2000 and for the quadrennium 2001–2004—the IESIP review should have regard to the need to maintain the Flexibility between permanent and part-time positions.

**REC 75:** in the light of the high value placed on the educational return for students of the work of these staff and their continuing professional development, that the NTDE move to progressively incorporate these positions into the core business funding of the department.

**REC 76:** NTDE develops and implements an intense and structured effort to support the skilling of Indigenous staff especially in the area of teaching English as a second or foreign language.

**REC 77:** the mentoring program is continued and expanded.

**REC 78:** NTDE negotiates with NTETA to provide a greater level of funding for AIEW professional development.

**REC 79:** the department enters into agreements with training providers such as the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) and provide the release time and support for their staff seeking to gain initial qualifications, to undertake inservice training, or to upgrade their qualifications.

The Staffing chapter of Learning Lessons emphasises that good school leadership has a positive effect on the quality of education. As the review points out: School leadership is also critical to the meaningful involvement – or otherwise – of Indigenous people, either of staff or in terms of greater community involvement.<sup>5</sup>

DEET has taken steps to improve the recruitment of principals and teaching staff. School principal positions are advertised nationally online and through newspaper media. All teaching positions in the Northern Territory are advertised nationally

---

<sup>5</sup> Collins B, Lea T, 1999, Learning Lessons, An independent review of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory, p.72

through the DEET recruitment website. The website allows recruits nationwide and worldwide to see vacancies and to explore information about the context of the Northern Territory.

Professional support for principals and senior staff is available through various leadership programs including, the Leadership Development Program, the Public Sector Management Program, the Emerging Leaders course, and the Kigaruk Indigenous Men's Leadership course. These courses provide business management and public sector leadership training. In instances where principals and schools need on-the-job support, the staff from the Capability Development Unit at DEET work at the school to support the development of school leadership and the teaching team.

Orientation programs are provided for new staff of Northern Territory schools. These programs run for a full week and are continuously evaluated to ensure that they prepare staff for the complexity of the different teaching contexts. The orientation includes a detailed cross-cultural element including historical and cultural information, and strategies for working effectively in a cross-cultural environment. The orientation program covers the everyday practical realities of living and working in a remote Indigenous context. This is an important retention initiative as are the various incentives such as study leave, airfares and a range of subsidies.

There are various accountability measures to ensure that schools make Indigenous education core business. Schools are required to report a range of Indigenous education outcomes through the annual reporting process. Northern Territory principals' performance management plans all include a specific reference to improving Indigenous education outcomes. Action Plans for School Improvement are all expected to include strategies and targets to specifically improve education outcomes for Indigenous students.

Understanding methodological approaches to English as a Second Language (ESL), and being a skilled ESL practitioner are essential skills to deliver Indigenous education in the Northern Territory. Learning Lessons points out that DEET needs to have a quality control role over ESL courses for undergraduates and the ongoing training and compensatory training for the existing workforce. DEET participation on course advisory committees is a quality control measure for ESL courses. For example, Charles Darwin University is in the process of changing accredited courses and is consulting with DEET as a key stakeholder. DEET staff are often invited as guest lecturers.

Learning Lessons emphasises the need to provide ongoing ESL training for Northern Territory teachers. ESL coordinators are placed in each Group School and four ESL Coordinators cover the Arnhem and Rivers Clusters. These staff are delivering the revised ESL in the Mainstream course that now reflects the current Northern Territory context. In 2002 intensive short course training in ESL was offered after hours and on site in Tennant Creek, Darwin Palmerston, Kalkaringi, and Katherine. CDU is offering short accredited and non-accredited courses. DEET is examining the possibility of providing ESL training via online courses.

Accelerated Literacy is a literacy approach that is being delivered in remote (and some urban schools) with large numbers of Indigenous students. The Accelerated Literacy professional learning program currently provides intensive teacher training at 20 schools. In addition, the Two Way Learning schools are well supported by three Language Resource Officers and the school review process that ensures adherence to this methodology. In recognition that effective delivery of ESL is an essential precondition for success in Indigenous education, the Curriculum Services Branch has

made the delivery of ESL training a strategic goal for the next four years. DEET has also increased the allocation of ESL teachers. DEET employs 60 specialist ESL teachers over and above the established staff numbers in schools. Further, there are above establishment staff allocated to support English oracy acquisition for Indigenous ESL students in their first formal year of schooling.

The recruitment and training of Indigenous people continues to be a challenge. DEET does not currently have reliable data about the numbers of Indigenous teachers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the number of Indigenous teachers is declining, and the existing teachers are aging. Teacher training courses at Charles Darwin University and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education continue to provide the same options for Indigenous recruits as were available at the time of writing *Learning Lessons*. As an alternative pathway to teaching, DEET is considering an Apprenticeship for Indigenous Education Workers at Certificate level III. Indigenous people are also employed in schools using Australian Government targeted funding.

While DEET has a Workforce Development Strategy and an Indigenous Capacity Building Plan, there has been little real implementation to date. Some work has occurred to determine the policies, issues, barriers and support options related to increasing the number of Indigenous teachers. DEET has commenced reporting on Indigenous staff numbers and positions as part of the Indigenous Capacity Building Plan.

During negotiations for the 2002 – 2004 Teachers and Educators Certified Agreement, a new paraprofessional employment category was put forward: the Teacher Support Officer (TSO). Negotiation for this new classification is currently occurring. The TSO classification will have a number of levels and provides a pathway for the range of Indigenous positions including Assistant Teachers and Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers (AIEW). In 2005 all AIEW positions became core funded by the Northern Territory Government.

Work is ongoing to develop a new staffing formula for Northern Territory schools. Remote area teacher and assistant teacher allocations have not changed. Assistant teachers have not yet been allocated to secondary schools, and if the new staffing formula is to be cost neutral, it is unlikely that this will occur in future.

The final recommendations of the *Staffing* chapter focus on professional learning and support for Indigenous education staff. There are two areas of training that are recommended here. One is formal training, aimed at Indigenous staff who work in paraprofessional roles such as AIEWs, and the other is mentoring, which is directed to supporting trained Indigenous teachers in the workplace. Indigenous staff who do not have teacher training qualifications have had the option of enrolling in the Certificate III in Indigenous Education Work offered by Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education. Indigenous male staff have the option to participate in the Kigaruk Indigenous Men's Leadership Development Program, and more recently Indigenous women have the option to participate in the Lookrukin Indigenous Women's Leadership Development Program. Senior school staff at remote schools provide support to Assistant Teachers through 'learning together' sessions that are timetabled each week. Currently the Indigenous Teacher Education Salary Scheme (ITESS) and approved student status allow teachers to study in school hours.

## SUMMARY

Recommendation numbers	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
52 - 79	1		10	17

DEET has improved recruitment processes to fill teacher vacancies across the Northern Territory. DEET is also providing structured support for school leaders, new teachers and para-professional staff.

There is currently no reliable trend data to describe the fluctuations of Indigenous teachers in the labour force. Anecdotal information from remote communities describes a decline in the numbers of new Indigenous staff coming through the ranks to replace the older teachers. DEET is beginning the process to properly identify the segments of its labour force and to monitor the trends and fluctuations in supply and demand for teachers. Accompanying this, DEET will need to develop and formalise processes and incentives to attract and retain Indigenous teachers.

There is significant work ahead to improve the retention, training and support of Indigenous teaching staff. For example, there is limited support for Indigenous teachers once they are located in schools because the mentoring program has not been reinstated. The mentoring program provided structured, weekly on-site support for Indigenous classroom teachers. Mentoring provided support in curriculum planning and development, as well as classroom management support. The current staffing formula does not accommodate this resource.

### **Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008**

The *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008* will prioritise the following actions:

#### **Leadership and Workforce Development**

*Priority Action 8: Develop and implement policy and procedures that will strengthen the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers in remote schools, particularly in areas such as:*

- *identifying the essential skills teachers need to successfully teach Indigenous students*
- *preparing and supporting teachers living and teaching in a remote locality*
- *providing attractive conditions of service, in particular incentives that encourage longer stays at one school*
- *encouraging greater local Indigenous teacher recruitment*

*Priority Action 9: Develop a new model for Indigenous leadership in remote schools*

*Priority Action 10: Develop and introduce protocols to increase the rate of Indigenous employment in the Department of Employment, Education and Training to 15 percent of the workforce*

## **SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATION FOR THE NORTHERN TERRITORY INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL**

The NTIEC may consider requesting information from DEET about the Indigenous teacher mentoring program. DEET's response to recommendation 77: *the mentoring program is continued and expanded* is as follows:

*The DEET Workforce Development Strategy includes an Indigenous Capacity Building Work Plan to achieve an appropriate proportion of skilled Indigenous staff. Mentoring will be considered in the implementation of this plan, particularly in relation to Indigenous cadets, and Indigenous Teacher Education Salary Scheme staff. A program offering training for mentors will be developed. The current Probation Program has a mentoring section as does the Induction Program component.*

This response does not specifically address the intention of this recommendation, which is to expand the mentoring program that operated to support Indigenous teachers in the workforce. This program no longer operates in Northern Territory schools.

# Chapter 7

## Access and provision: Recommendations 80 – 97

**REC 80:** there be an increase in the exposure of all Indigenous children to early literacy and numeracy learning in vernacular where appropriate and Standard Australian English oracy.

**REC 81:** NTDE investigates joint funding arrangements with Territory Health Services, DETYA and the Federal Department of Family and Children's Services to develop play centres and distribute reading and pre-literacy material and educational play equipment to all sites that are accessible to parents and children, for example, health clinics and women's centres. This would build on the THS-NTDE Framework Agreement on the Provision of Early Childhood and Outside School Hours Care Services for Young Territory Children (NTDE/THS 1999).

**REC 82:** mobile preschools and playgroups are considered as interim solutions to ensure guaranteed access for all children to structured early childhood education.

**REC 83:** sufficient funding is sought to enhance the key role libraries play in the development of literacy outcomes for Indigenous students and opportunities for coordinated service development and a coordinated approach to funding are explored.

**REC 84:** within a period of five years, there be guaranteed access to play centres and preschools for all children in the three to five year age group.

**REC 85:** new facilities for infants and toddlers should be designed with the aim of establishing multipurpose early childhood centres that offer infant health and other early childhood services. Such centres would not need to be administered by the school but could be run by other suitable organisations.

**REC 86:** the multipurpose early childhood centres incorporate childcare facilities for Indigenous school staff and young mothers who are still students.

**REC 87:** NTDE explores means of expanding the number of secondary courses that are available in remote areas and staffing them appropriately.

**REC 88:** within six months, the NTDE develops policy recommendations on secondary programs which provide for

- options for providing secondary programs to all Indigenous secondary-age students, with secondary trained teachers supported by ESL specialists
- conversion of community education centres to area school secondary providers, i.e. able to implement board approved special category and mainstream secondary curriculum, which are staffed accordingly
- the assessment of large rural schools that fall outside of the CEC category for their potential conversion to area school status
- a reassessment of remote area secondary school staff formula determinations
- expansion of the hostel arrangements currently operating successfully in Tennant Creek and Katherine
- an exploration of the options for providing high-quality state-of-the art IT&T support for distance learning
- an identification of overall resource requirements.

**REC 89:** within twelve months NTDE has a clear policy on increasing secondary options to the end of the compulsory years for all Indigenous students, urban and remote.

**REC 90:** the vocational education and training funding and resource agreements between NTETA and registered training organisations be comprehensively reviewed.

**REC 91:** as a transitional measure, NTETA should move to significantly expand the funds available to the Flexible Response Funding program from within its existing global budgets.

**REC 92: in consulting with a community on its training requirements, that NTETA directly involves the school principal and the educational board if that has been established in that region/community.**

**REC 93: there is a permanently based adult education provider presence at community level where appropriate. In this regard, the initiatives being taken by the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education should be supported.**

**REC 94: AITAP is supported but a continuing effort made to encourage the greater involvement in the program by remote students, including those attending urban residential colleges and high schools.**

**REC 95: the impending Student Services Review examines the provision of student services and special education to Indigenous students in the Northern Territory, as a specific term of reference.**

**REC 96: the impending Student Services Review considers equity of service provision for students with special needs.**

**REC 97: the impending Student Services Review makes recommendations on the facilities required and costs involved to ensure all schools are catering for hearing impairment and levels of physical disability in Indigenous students as design requirements.**

The *Access and Provision* chapter focuses on the provision of education at the two ends of schooling, the beginning point - early childhood, and the latter point - secondary education. Learning Lessons makes six recommendations about early childhood, all directed to the provision of infrastructure and programs. The first of these is about increasing the overall exposure of Indigenous children to early childhood programs. This is occurring in a number of communities in the Northern Territory. For the most part, the Australian Government funds the increase in provision, though there are some joint initiatives with DEET.

DEET has core funded mobile preschools for the Katherine region, as well as funding a range of infrastructure projects to provide preschool facilities. Some cross agency programming is occurring between DEET and the NT Department of Health and Community Services such as the School Breakfast Pilot, and the Healthy School Age Kids programs.

In 2002 - 2004 the National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NIELNS) funded Mobile Preschools for children in Groote Eylandt, Katherine, Arnhem and Sandover regions. These sites are now supported by DEET funding. Through these trials, a model for service provision was developed. Under the model, Teacher Support Officers on site are supported by visiting specialist teachers.

Australian Government funded child care facilities have been developed in Central Australia, and services are being developed and expanded in Yuendumu, Mutitjulu, Mt Leibig, Titjikala, Ikuntji and Yuelamu. Three pilot programs are currently being developed at Yuendumu, Mount Leibig and Mutitjulu, in partnership with the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services (FACS). There are 13 JET crèches providing varying degrees of health promotion, care and early learning – Barunga, Minyerri, Alice Springs, Borroloola, Elliot, Gapuwiyak, Irrkerlatye, Jilkminggan, Maningrida, Ngukurr, Ntaria, Waruwi and Yuelamu.

Community initiatives have combined preschool and childcare facilities in Barunga, Minyerri, Wugularr and Yirrkala, and others may exist. Two Alice Springs programs offer child care for young student parents in their programs at Alice Outcomes and Gap Youth Centre.

The second part of this Learning Lessons chapter is focussed on the expansion of secondary education options for Indigenous students, especially in remote locations. Five remote Northern Territory schools are now offering formal secondary programs as part of the immediate provision of secondary education. The schools are Kalkaringi CEC, Maningrida CEC, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Thamarrur Catholic School, Yirrkala CEC and Shepherdson College. The expansion of this program is part of the 'Building Better Schools' package.

Two Interactive Distance Learning (IDL) studios and 150 NT based two-way satellite sites have been established to provide additional secondary subjects for students with limited course options. They are located at Alice Springs School of the Air and Darwin at the Northern Territory Open Education Centre.

DEET has taken steps to increase the secondary education options to students in the post compulsory years by providing qualified counsellors and career advisers to all secondary schools. DEET is also providing a specific educational focus on 11 to 14 year olds to engage them and prepare them for later years of education.

Since Learning Lessons there has been additional funding for Vocational Education and Training (VET) to expand subject choice and to provide important skills. The Training for Remote Youth (TRY) program was created in May 2002 to engage remote youth back into the school and employment sector. These funds have increased remote community access to VET courses, enabling some remote schools to deliver vocational education and training for the first time. An expansion of the Flexible Response Funding program was not possible due to budget limitations.

DEET has been negotiating with the Australian Government to ensure that funding mechanisms support the delivery of suitable training to NT communities. As a result, a new training purchasing policy was introduced in 2004. This is expected to lead to further improvements in VET delivery. Resource agreements are reviewed on an annual basis.

There has been greater collaboration and cooperative projects between VET providers and schools since the publication of Learning Lessons. TRY, VET and School Based Apprenticeship processes include input from school principals. A policy reference group has recently met to discuss roles and responsibilities of all parties in relation to the provision of training and work placements including the role of principals. In addition, Employment and Training personnel are involved in the planning and delivery of secondary education at schools providing Stage 1 subjects through the NTOEC and at schools that provide VET subjects through Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

The planning for secondary VET provision in remote schools always involves consultation with the community, Employment and Training Division and other relevant agencies and people. In 2003 the process of consultation was expanded to incorporate the Government, Independent and Catholic education sectors. In 2004, the process of consultation was further broadened to incorporate Regional and Community Development Boards. The policy for the VET in schools program directs that schools are compulsorily consulted and/or given the opportunity to put forth proposals for training. Employment and Training advise school principals from public and private schools about VET activities through a Principal Portfolio Advisory Group.

This chapter also covers the delivery of education to students with special needs. In May 2000 the DEET *Student Services Review* was published. The terms of reference of the review included the requirement to 'identify areas of need and appropriate

models of service delivery for all identified students including those from remote communities' and 'to create a proposal for provision of equitable support services to all students and other clients with disabilities, learning impairments and special needs'.

DEET has established a Student Services Action Group with representatives from schools, special schools, the Australian Education Union, and DEET. This group has been instrumental in developing and implementing the Wellbeing Project, and is now developing a new resource model for support services. The model is based on principles of equitable distribution of available resources. The service model works through the school clusters. A 'scheduled visit' program is being trialled. Overall, DEET has significantly extended support to remote schools. Records show a marked increase in visits, provision of inclusion support funding and critical incidence support. As an example the travel cost to Arnhem schools has increased by 100% over the last year.

## SUMMARY

Recommendation numbers	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
80 - 97	2		8	8

DEET has made advances in the provision of education at the beginning points of school, for early childhood, and at the latter stages of school for secondary education. DEET has also increased funding to extend vocational education in remote locations. The challenge for DEET is to continue to provide a variety of educational services and options to a population spread across remote and sometimes inaccessible geo-locations. This work is ongoing, as is the work to support students with special needs. There is now a national focus on early childhood, with the Australian Government's *Towards a National Agenda for Early Childhood*. DEET has also recently drafted an Early Years Framework.

### Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008

The *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008* aims to continue the work of the Learning Lessons recommendations of this chapter, with the same focus on:

#### Access to Education

*Priority Action 5: Expand the delivery of pre-school programs in remote Indigenous communities*

*Priority Action 6: Expand the delivery of relevant and accessible secondary education for secondary-ready Indigenous people, including a new model for distance learning*

*Priority Action 7: Develop and implement an enhanced strategic infrastructure plan for school assets and teacher housing in regional and remote communities*

#### Health and Well-Being of Learners

*Priority Action 11: Develop a Memorandum of Understanding, incorporating protocols, for all remote communities with a school and a health centre, to provide a sound basis for improving learning and health outcomes*

# Chapter 8

## Language and literacy acquisition: Recommendations 98 – 116

**REC 98:** NTDE supports 'two-way learning' programs in schools where the local community wants such a program, and assessment demonstrating the essential elements for its effective delivery are in place.

**REC 99:** the initial assessment, and any ongoing assessment, must be dispassionate, rigorous and unequivocally focused on agreed outcomes.

**REC 100:** NTDE issues a formal policy document which clearly states the NTDE policy of support for 'two-way learning', affirming the value of Indigenous language and culture and highlighting the importance of learning of Standard Australian English oracy and literacy as a crucial element of the schooling process.

**REC 101:** the teaching framework adopted to support 'two-way learning' needs to be flexible enough to incorporate in a soundly based educational program the individual situations and requirements of different communities.

**REC 102:** NTDE urgently commissions high-level research into the use of vernacular in Indigenous schools to develop the most appropriate pedagogy to support effective learning in this environment. A comprehensive analysis as part of this research must establish what is required to ensure effective exposure to Standard Australian English oracy and literacy takes place, while supporting vernacular language development. The research undertaken must be focused on improving outcomes.

**REC 103:** NTDE explores all possible avenues of increasing the exposure of Indigenous students to spoken Standard Australian English.

**REC 104:** as an immediate measure, NTDE with DETYA progressively extend the ESL ILSS program across all primary years.

**REC 105:** urgent priority is given to develop strategies to improve the unacceptably low attendance of enrolled ESL ILSS students.

**REC 106:** Indigenous viewpoints, perceptions and expectations about social, cultural and historical matters are reflected in the curricula, teaching and administration of all NT schools.

**REC 107:** NTDE examines options for producing high-quality curriculum material, which would add to the understanding by students everywhere of the value of our unique Indigenous cultures and languages and their interaction with Western culture.

**REC 108:** options for extending the IAD Languages in Schools Program are explored.

**REC 109:** NTDE develops a strategy for all schools, in the face of high turnover, and uniquely challenging teaching conditions, which detail how language acquisition programs are delivered in the school.

**REC 110:** NTDE ensures quality materials are available and information on guided reading schemes is available within all schools. This includes the potential of electronic media.

**REC 111:** particular focus is placed on appropriate material relevant to secondary-age Indigenous students.

**REC 112:** NTDE explores options for making this material available to parents and not just restricted to teachers and schools.

**REC 113:** a Strategic Support Unit be established to provide critical management advice on student services.

**REC 114: a Service Level Agreement between NTDE and the Northern Territory Library and Information Service is established to clarify expectations regarding services to be provided to remote school libraries—as well as urban school libraries. Key issues to be considered include the level and nature of services, funding for resources and the appropriate use of joint use facilities.**

**REC 115: NTDE rationalises literature production centres and explore opportunities to retain text production, graphics and illustration in communities and have publication tasks completed elsewhere.**

**REC 116: literature production centres shift their focus to take advantage of contemporary technologies.**

The *Language and Literacy Acquisition* chapter of Learning Lessons focuses on the need for appropriate language, literacy and numeracy methodologies in Northern Territory schools. It recommends the extension of early childhood programs, and the rigorous evaluation of programs operating in primary schools. It calls for research into methodologies that use the vernacular as part of the pedagogy of teaching English literacy.

The first four recommendations focus on vernacular programs; currently known as Two Way Learning programs in the Northern Territory. The recommendations stress the need for research and evidence that identifies essential elements to support the program, as well as rigorous evaluation of the delivery of the programs.

In 2004, eleven Two Way Learning programs were being delivered in ten Northern Territory schools. These programs were established in the 1970s when bilingual education was first set up in the Northern Territory. These programs are rigorously evaluated biennially.

There is currently no process for additional Northern Territory schools to receive Two Way Learning resources, though in principle, there is no policy impediment to prevent schools from delivering part of the curriculum in the vernacular. The difficulty for schools is finding teachers who are able to deliver education in the vernacular. Australian Government funding is widely used by schools to fund Indigenous instructors to provide various levels of Indigenous language development and culture programs.

Schools delivering Two Way Learning programs require facilities to produce language resource materials in the vernacular. There is currently one operating purpose-built Literature Production Centre at Shepherdson College. Four Language Resource Development Units operate at Maningrida, Shepherdson College, Yuendumu and Yirrkala. Funding from the Two Way Learning Program provides two additional operational staff at each centre. No budget allocation is provided for Production equipment or consumables.

The current four Language Resource Development Units come under the financial operations of the schools in which they are situated. The level of contemporary equipment used in resource development is fully dependent on the financial capacity of individual schools to purchase and/or lease equipment. There is no specific systemic financial support for the centres.

In response to Learning Lessons recommendations, in 2004 – 2005, DEET commissioned research into Indigenous language and culture in education. There were a number of findings. Early analysis of MAP test data from a small sample of

students at Two Way Learning schools indicated higher English reading scores in Years 5 and 7 when compared to other students from remote schools without the program. This would suggest that instructing students in the vernacular for at least part of the school day might benefit English literacy outcomes. DEET is currently looking to ways in which other schools can adopt the Two Way Learning methodology, and how they can be supported in the short term with limited resources.

The 2004 - 2005 DEET research also found that 73 Northern Territory schools provide structured weekly programs that focus on Indigenous language or culture or both. Fifty four of the programs had a language component. This means that 39 percent of Northern Territory schools were engaged in sustained language and culture programs. The full findings of this research project are due to be delivered to the DEET Executive Group in 2005.

English as a Second Language (ESL) has always had priority. In fact, during the next quadrennium DEET has committed to make ESL core business. Northern Territory schools are now directed by policy to ensure that students receive a minimum of two hours per day of standard Australian English oracy, literacy and numeracy. DEET is now in the process of establishing a longitudinal study of literacy approaches and their impact on English literacy outcomes.

There has been a range of literacy and ESL activity in NT schools. The Accelerated Literacy Program is being rolled out to both urban and remote schools. The Indigenous Language Speaking Students program and Teaching and Assessing Oral English program both emphasise the development of oral Standard Australian English. Ten additional teachers have been allocated to remote schools to support ESL programs. Schools have identified students with specific needs and staff have been redeployed to schools with high support demand.

The ESL Indigenous Language Speaking Students (ILSS) program is an Australian Government funded project aimed at providing early English speaking learning environments for five to six year old children. In 2002, 64 schools (561 students) participated. In 2003, 74 schools participated (637 students). In 2004, 69 schools participated (630 students). Ten Two Way Schools exist with eleven programs in the vernacular available to early childhood students.

DEET continues to encourage schools to improve attendance of enrolled ESL-ILSS students. Schools are asked to hold meetings with parents to inform them of the program and importance of their child's involvement. Most schools advise that when the children are in the community, they do attend, though there continues to be high mobility in remote communities and this means that in 2004 most students were absent between 40 and 100 days. From 2005, absence data will be further broken down to provide accurate analysis on absence patterns. However, absence does not necessarily correlate to poor achievement in this program. It is often the case, that those students who are absent are in urban centres where they increase their English oracy skills.

Recommendation 106 emphasises the importance of representing Indigenous cultural and social views in the curricula, and through other artefacts in the school. Current research indicates that the vast majority of schools have significant language and culture programs. DEET has formalised Indigenous language and culture curricula through its curriculum framework. The NTCF has an Indigenous language and culture section, providing a comprehensive curriculum and assessment framework from Transition to Year 10. The NTCF also provides a subject-based

Indigenous language and culture curriculum framework as well as Indigenous perspectives across all learning areas of the curriculum.

According to a 2004 telephone survey, 97 percent of all Northern Territory schools provide culture and/or language programs. These programs are supported by the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework (NTCF) from Transition through to Year 10. DEET is currently funding projects to provide classroom learning materials that will accompany the NTCF subjects. These materials will be available to all schools via the Intranet. Students in NTCE Stage 1 and 2 can choose from a range of elective subjects should they choose to pursue Indigenous language and culture.

The NTCF is the cornerstone of curriculum programs in all Northern Territory Government schools. It ensures consistency across the subject areas as well as providing consistent assessment frameworks. A great deal of the curriculum support materials, that is, the classroom handouts, reading materials and learning stimuli are sourced at the school level, though the Indigenous Language and Culture Layer 2 project will collect and collate curriculum materials that will be available through the DEET portal. While there is currently some variation in the quality of materials across classes and schools, there are some excellent examples of curriculum materials. For example, some Indigenous language materials that were developed at Maningrida CEC are to be published on the SSABSA website as exemplars for other teachers.

Given the high teacher turnover in the NT, it is essential for schools to document their literacy and numeracy programs so that new teachers do not disrupt student learning with teaching methodologies that are not cognisant of the whole school approach. All NT schools now have a School Literacy and Numeracy Plan that commits the whole school to consistent approaches in English oracy, literacy and numeracy. Many of these approaches are supported with professional development from DEET regarding programs such as the Walking Talking Texts program, the Accelerated Literacy approach and the Two Way Learning program.

Libraries provide invaluable curriculum support resources to students and schools. Libraries often have reference material and other archival material that cannot be sourced elsewhere. Learning Lessons recommends service level agreements between the Northern Territory Library Information Services and DEET. In 2004 DEET took over the management of the Education Library from the NT Library Information Service (NTLIS). The Library continues to service Territory schools, with significant usage of the Library's loans facility by remote schools. Additionally, NTLIS continues to support an officer that assists remote schools to develop and maintain their libraries. A working party was formed to develop an MOU between NTLIS and DEET. Part of this process was the development of a strategic approach to library service provision by DEET. Remote service provision is a key area for consideration.

Some Northern Territory schools are able to progressively archive Indigenous language and culture materials through literature production centres. These centres are located in five Two Way Learning schools. With the exception of one, all other literature production centres have taken full advantage of a range of technologies including desktop publishing hardware and software, digital recording and storage of still and moving images, and full colour printing and book production machinery. Schools that are teaching through the vernacular are updating and archiving a wide range of language and culture materials for current and future students.

## SUMMARY

Recommendation numbers	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
98 - 116	3		9	7

There is evidence that DEET has escalated efforts to ensure the provision of quality English literacy and Indigenous language and culture programs. Through mandating English literacy and numeracy plans, DEET has ensured that schools implement and document explicit pedagogies for English language, literacy and numeracy. This work is ongoing. The NT literacy evaluation project will give DEET direction about which pedagogies provide the best outcomes given certain preconditions. DEET is also providing Layer 2 curriculum materials to support Indigenous language and culture programs.

### **Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008**

DEET intends to continue this work into the future through the *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008*, in particular through the following priority actions:

#### **High Quality Teaching and Learning**

*Priority Action 1: Increase focus on the development and delivery of high quality school Literacy and Numeracy Plans and programs such as the delivery of the Accelerated Literacy Program*

*Priority Action 2: Increase focus on the evaluation of teaching programs at the school level and provide leadership and support to teachers in regional and remote schools to ensure delivery of high quality teaching programs that are rigorous and relevant to student needs*

*Priority Action 3: Incorporate Indigenous perspectives into school teaching programs and deliver Indigenous Language and Culture programs*

# Chapter 9

## Attendance and participation: Recommendations 117 – 130

**REC 117:** a comprehensive attendance strategy is developed as a matter of urgent priority, building on the range of useful practices already being implemented in individual schools.

**REC 118:** a developed comprehensive attendance strategy be a critical element of the partnership agreements under Self-Managing Schools Program (see Conclusion).

**REC 119:** NTDE recognises that there are communities of affiliation between which students and families will move in a patterned way and organise its administration to better align with these affiliated communities.

**REC 120:** NTDE draws on other agency data and liaises with the various land councils and other relevant organisations, e.g. the community controlled health sector and outstation resource centres to better map and anticipate population movements.

**REC 121:** NTDE implements student tracking systems that allow teachers to more freely exchange student information between such communities of affiliation, to improve the education continuity for the student.

**REC 122:** NTDE organises school clusters to correspond with patterns of visiting and residence.

**REC 123:** NTDE ensures that affiliated schools work collaboratively to share information, jointly plan program delivery, coordinate school services and professional development support, and are consulted as a regional grouping for administrative and policy considerations.

**REC 124:** infant health interventions are introduced within the multipurpose early childhood centres recommended by this review.

**REC 125:** health objectives are incorporated within school action plans and principal performance management agreements, to ensure the links are maintained in practice as well as theory.

**REC 126:** community service agreements are established between the school and the community health centre.

**REC 127:** teachers are trained and supported for their health and community development role.

**REC 128:** all teachers receive training and support in appropriate teaching practices for students with hearing impairments.

**REC 129:** benchmark standards for classroom acoustics for students with hearing disabilities and for all Indigenous ESL students are established in collaboration with Territory Health Services, the Australian Government Hearing Laboratory and the Menzies School of Health Research.

**REC 130:** a systematic plan is developed, resourced and implemented to upgrade classroom acoustics in accordance with these standards to create sound listening and learning environments for Indigenous students.

The *Attendance and Participation* chapter of Learning Lessons makes the point that if students do not attend school regularly, their academic performance will be below average. School attendance continues to be of a concern in the Northern Territory, particularly in remote regions. While Indigenous student retention rates have been

increasing since 2001,<sup>6</sup> there is much that needs to be done in future. DEET has developed a comprehensive *Enrolment, Attendance and Retention Strategy*. Since July 2003 DEET has implemented a number of initiatives and a detailed implementation plan is currently being developed.

In 2003 seven School Attendance Officers were employed in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Palmerston, Darwin's northern suburbs, Yirrkala and Angurugu. An eighth position was provided to Thamarrurr Community Council in the form of a grant.

School Attendance Officers identify school aged children who are not enrolled or whose attendance is irregular. They then develop strategies in conjunction with the principal to engage the children in schooling. At Gillen Primary, Sadadeen Primary and Alice Springs High, transitional classes have been established for Indigenous students who are disengaged from school. These classes are designed to provide intensive support to students to enable them to re-enter mainstream schooling. A similar program has been established off-site in Tennant Creek through a partnership between Tennant Creek High School and Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation.

Alternative education programs operate in Darwin, Palmerston, Alice Springs and Katherine. These programs are designed to meet the needs of young people at risk of disengagement from school, with the aim of facilitating their re-entry into school, further study, training, or employment.

Secondary Indigenous students are now being tracked through the transition points of primary to secondary and junior to senior secondary in order for DEET to understand the patterns of disengagement. This information will assist in targeting staff and resources where they are most needed.

Students in the Northern Territory routinely move across communities of affiliation. DEET now has a database<sup>7</sup> to record Indigenous status, traditional name and skin group. When fully operational, this database will assist with transferring information across schools so that the education program can follow the student. With the introduction of a unique student identifier that is allocated to students when they first enrol at school, tracking students who enter and leave the education system will become easier. DEET is also working to match Australian Bureau of Statistics data to school locations to map population movements.

While DEET has developed sophisticated student tracking systems, it has not changed its administrative arrangements so that schools that share community affiliation or common language group are grouped or clustered together. While there has been some research and initial discussion about language groups and community affiliations, there has been no action despite Learning Lessons recommendation 122, and the recommendation from the Learning Lessons Implementation Steering Committee to strengthen the Warlpiri Triangle by including all of its communities in one Cluster and Group School.

Just as absenteeism is a major contributor to poor student academic performance so is poor health. It is not yet compulsory for schools to report on health initiatives, though in 2004 DEET issued a questionnaire and found that 72 of the 111 schools that responded have incorporated health objectives into their School Action Plans. Health issues are not yet considered in principal performance agreements.

---

<sup>6</sup> See Charts 1, 2, and 3 for Indigenous student enrolment and retention data

<sup>7</sup> Student Assessment and Monitoring System - SAMS database

There are a number of ways that teaching staff in Northern Territory government schools receive training in health. Since 2004, the DEET teacher orientation program has included training in health and community development. For teachers already practicing in schools DEET provides in-service training about hearing health. There are also formal accredited health training options. Charles Darwin University offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses in health and community development for teachers. Batchelor Institute's Certificate III and IV in Indigenous Education Work include units in health.

Acoustic treatments are provided in all new education facilities in remote areas. This includes the sound insulation of walls, floors, ceilings and air-conditioning. As DEET is now undertaking a comprehensive audit of infrastructure, acoustics will be a prominent feature of future planning. DEET will work collaboratively with NT Acoustic Laboratory to determine the most appropriate and up to date processes for acoustic treatments of educational facilities. This work will lead to a design standard for adequate acoustics. This standard will assist DEET to determine the cost of upgrading all schools to a suitable standard. Funding has not yet been secured for this upgrade.

DEET and the Department of Health and Community Services DHCS are collaborating on health issues through the *Intersectoral Hearing Services Action Plan*. Joint DHCS and DEET frameworks are being developed and improved to coordinate and integrate services. For example, elements of the DHCS and DEET Healthy School Aged Kids Program are currently being reviewed to enhance the education component of the program.

## SUMMARY

Recommendation numbers	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
117 - 130	2		8	4

The DEET Enrolment, Attendance and Retention Strategy is a comprehensive plan to improve attendance and participation. Since July 2003 DEET has implemented a number of initiatives and employed staff to specifically address student attendance. DEET has established programs in four areas of the Northern Territory to meet the needs of students who are disengaged, or at risk of being disengaged from school.

DEET is implementing initiatives that will link the education and health sectors to ensure the best possible health service to students. In addition, DEET is ensuring that all new education infrastructure in remote regions is acoustically treated in order not to disadvantage students with hearing impairments.

### Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008

Student attendance, participation and health will be addressed through the following actions of the *Indigenous Education Strategic plan 2005 – 2008*:

#### Stakeholder Agreements and Partnerships

*Priority Action 4: Develop Local School and Community Charters for the larger remote centres to help the Indigenous community and school work closer together*

## **Health and Well-Being of Learners**

*Priority Action 11: Develop a Memorandum of Understanding, incorporating protocols, for all remote communities with a school and a health centre, to provide a sound basis for improving learning and health outcomes*

## **SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NORTHERN TERRITORY INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL**

Students in the Northern Territory routinely move across communities of affiliation. The NTIEC may consider requesting information about DEET's future intentions to assess school administrative arrangements that currently do not incorporate Indigenous communities of affiliation or communities with shared languages. The current school Cluster arrangements make it difficult for some schools that share a common language to utilise formal communication channels and to access training and development funds so that they can work together. For example, the four Warlpiri communities are in two DEET Clusters making it difficult for teachers and other Warlpiri education stakeholders to utilise DEET funds to collaborate in resource-sharing and professional learning.

Improving student school attendance continues to be challenge. There are a number of government departments that have a part to play in improving student school attendance. There is a potential role for the NTIEC to seek information about existing legislation that impacts on student school attendance, and existing roles and responsibilities of various government departments in this matter. The NTIEC may use this information as a beginning point to survey the options for future strategies to improve student school attendance.

# Chapter 10

## Data Deficiencies: Recommendations 131 – 141

**REC 131: NTDE clarifies and defines what is categorised as attendance and makes this the standard measure across all schools.**

**REC 132: NTDE commissions work to cost and develop a comprehensive approach to the tracking of all children to enable tracking of multiple target groups supporting the recommendations under 'Mobility'.**

**REC 133: the data enables disaggregation to target areas most in need.**

**REC 134: systems be developed to allow daily participation for Indigenous students to be reliably monitored.**

**REC 135: all data allows separate analysis of Indigenous attendance and outcomes.**

**REC 136: attendance information be routinely included in educational outcomes reports to allow key variables to be distinguished.**

**REC 137: NTDE adopts alternate enumeration methods to calculate and report real participation rates.**

**REC 138: NTDE establishes an agreed population estimate for a particular community via negotiations between the school, health centre and other agencies and organisations with a strong community presence, including housing, local government and the local community council.**

**REC 139: as a matter of urgency, school transfer and appointments data are analysed to give senior management an immediate and contemporary portrait of staff turnover and the cost to the department to benchmark the impact of wider reforms arising out of this review.**

**REC 140: resources are dedicated to ensure historical information is included in the Teacher Information System as a matter of priority.**

**REC 141: reduction in teacher turnover is a formal performance indicator and is regularly reported on at senior management level.**

This chapter of the report is concerned with establishing consistent and detailed data about Indigenous student enrolment, attendance and movement, in addition to establishing a facility to report this data to the most senior levels of DEET. As DEET's responses to a number of these recommendations are contained in Chapter 3 of this report, Management Systems, this section will not substantially repeat information that has already been provided.

In 2002, DEET reviewed and clarified the definition of school attendance and these definitions are now standardised across all DEET schools. Currently DEET only collects and reports attendance information at school level. Significant definitional work and business rules are yet to be established before individual student attendance information is available. DEET's data systems collect student level attendance down to individual periods on a daily basis. It is envisaged that reporting of this information will be available by 2006 at a system level. Schools have this

information at the student level and many routinely report attendance in student reports to parents and carers.

The Student Administration and Management System (SAMS) was installed in Government schools in 2003 to monitor the participation and movement of NT students. Information is loaded into SAMS recording daily student attendance. By 2006 DEET will be able to reliably track student movement across schools in the NT with another database - Centris. In order to track students as they leave the NT, agreement is being sought with the Education Department of Western Australia and Department of Education and Training South Australia through a Memorandum of Understanding. Whilst the WA Department of Education and Training uses the same system as the NT, their version has been heavily modified and electronic school to school transfer of records across jurisdictions is not currently possible. The NT has the facility to share information with SA schools.

An Indigenous status indicator is included in all current student data collections. This has ensured that data on Indigenous students can be disaggregated from other students. Currently reporting is already available on Indigenous student attendance and MAP results. In future this will be supplemented with information about student completions at stages of the NTCF, of NTCE and of VET modules.

DEET is working with the Australian Bureau of Statistics to create accurate community population profiles against which to compare student enrolment and participation rates at school. DEET is part of the Population Intelligence Working Group, a joint initiative between the NT Government and the ABS. This work is ongoing.

In addition to student information, DEET relies on accurate information about school staff and teacher turnover. Prior to Learning Lessons, DEET had crude categories to determine teacher turnover. The lowest measurement unit was six years. That meant that DEET could not ascertain whether the majority of the teachers in this category were staying five years or five months.

In 2004, DEET introduced exit surveys for departing staff and climate surveys for existing staff, which provide qualitative information about staff retention issues to complement existing qualitative data. By 2006, more sophisticated reporting will be generated to enable comparisons between schools and to identify statistically significant staff downturns and improvements over time. These analyses will identify resource loss by school, region, and cluster, analysed over a three to four year period. DEET senior executives currently receive weekly reports on staff vacancies. By the end of 2006 there will be regular staffing reports that identify problem areas as well as reports on strategies to deal with turnover and retention.

The establishment of the NT Teacher Registration Board (TRB) in 2004 adds an additional source of teacher data. The TRB has been charged with registering teachers, or granting authorisation to an employer to employ an unregistered person; liaising with providers of teacher education and professional development in the Northern Territory; supporting the development of appropriate teacher education courses; and developing a code of ethics for Territory teachers. The TRB provides information about registered teachers in the NT who may be temporarily out of the workforce. This adds an important dimension to information about the teacher labour force.

## SUMMARY

Recommendation numbers	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
131 – 141	1		4	6

DEET will continue the work on data systems and applications in order to improve the administration and delivery of educational services to Indigenous students. Two additional data collection features will continue to improve information about Indigenous students. Firstly, DEET has developed an Indigenous status indicator to disaggregate Indigenous student data. In addition, the current work to create accurate community population profiles will ensure that DEET has an accurate picture of Indigenous student school participation and enrolment rates.

DEET is also collecting information about the teacher labour market. Labour market data ensures that DEET provides the best possible staffing options to schools across the NT. The establishment of the Teacher Registration Board further enhances teacher labour force information and tracking.

### **Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2004 – 2008**

The *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2004 – 2008* will focus on the following:

#### **Leadership and Workforce Development**

*Priority Action 8: Develop and implement policy and procedures that will strengthen the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers in remote schools, particularly in areas such as*

- *identifying the essential skills teachers need to successfully teach Indigenous students*
- *preparing and supporting teachers living and teaching in a remote locality*
- *providing attractive conditions of service, in particular incentives that encourage longer stays at one school*
- *encouraging greater local Indigenous teacher recruitment*

*Priority Action 9: Develop a new model for Indigenous leadership in remote schools*

*Priority Action 10: Develop and introduce protocols to increase the rate of Indigenous employment in the Department of Employment, Education and Training to 15 percent of the workforce*

#### **The Impact Framework**

*Priority Action 13: Develop school and community data profiles to inform school and corporate planning*

*Priority Action 14: Introduce a research and evaluation framework to address knowledge gaps and provide an evidence base to determine 'what works'*

*Priority Action 15: Develop protocols for allocating resources on the basis of rigorous evaluation and analysis*

# Chapter 11

## Community partnerships: Recommendations 142 - 151

**REC 142:** the IECNT be completely restructured.

**REC 143:** in the event of the Government not supporting this major recommendation at this time, the imminent reappointment of the existing council not proceed and a thorough review be conducted on behalf of the Northern Territory Government and Commonwealth Government.

**REC 144:** the Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory be established as a partnership between NTDE, the Northern Territory tertiary sector, ATSIC, and the land councils. All parties must be represented on the council at senior level.

**REC 145:** the council develops broad policy parameters for Indigenous education across all schools, provides advice to the Minister and DETYA and oversees the budget for the delivery of the Self-Managing Schools Program.

**REC 146:** an immediate responsibility of the council is to oversee and support the establishment of the pilots of the Self-Managing Schools Program and progressively extend these arrangements across the Northern Territory.

**REC 147:** the council works closely with Territory Health Services and DETYA. The Council Secretariat must have an ongoing working relationship with these two agencies and when appropriate they should be directly represented at meetings of the council. The council must also work closely with other providers of educational services to Indigenous students.

**REC 148:** the council be responsible for overseeing the implementation of agreed recommendations of this review.

**REC 149:** the pilot Self-Managing Schools Program be established under the auspices of the Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory.

**REC 150:** the program framework be flexible enough to allow community or regionally based arrangements incorporating the individual requirements of the communities concerned.

**REC 151:** the program takes every opportunity to work in partnership with other community controlled initiatives.

This chapter of Learning Lessons focuses on the need to establish Indigenous representation at all levels of decision making in the education process. Representation is required at the highest levels, providing advice directly to the Minister, and also importantly, in Northern Territory schools. This chapter describes the benefits of developing partnership roles between schools and communities, and the need to share accurate information about Indigenous student performance. In this Learning Lessons chapter there is emphasis on giving Indigenous stakeholders a legitimate role in educational decision-making, and creating learning environments that are truly welcoming of the local Indigenous community.

The first recommendation of this chapter was to decommission the Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory (IECNT). This occurred in June 2000. Alternative committee models were presented to replace the IECNT, but the Government preferred to focus on local partnerships between schools and Indigenous communities. As discussed in the introductory section of this report, in 2002 the Learning Lessons Implementation Steering Committee (LLISC) was

established for a period of two years to oversee the implementation of this review. The LLISC includes members from ATSIC, the Central Land Council, and the health and education sectors. The LLISC reports to the Minister on progress made towards implementing Learning Lessons recommendations and implementing the DEET Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2000 - 2004. The committee considers, endorses and comments on plans for implementation as well as providing direction for the Department.

The Northern Territory Indigenous Education Council (NTIEC) has been approved to replace the Learning Lessons Implementation Steering Committee. The new membership list is not yet determined, but it will be an inclusive rather than exclusive list, and include senior representatives from major Indigenous organisations. Members will be selected and appointed by the Minister for their ability to contribute to a peak Indigenous education body. The prime purpose of the new council will be the provision of advice to the Minister on issues affecting Indigenous education and training, and work to improve education outcomes for Indigenous people in the Northern Territory.

The remainder of the Learning Lessons Community Partnerships chapter focuses on Self Managing Schools. The Self Managing Schools initiative has now been superseded by a community engagement approach. It is proposed that external consultants separate from both the community and the government, will facilitate the community engagement process. The intention is to produce commitments from the community about their role in the education and training of their children, and from the government about its role in providing education and training. From the engagement process, schools and communities will sign an education contract with each individual community, school and DEET specifying their responsibilities.

The community engagement approach will be focussed on 15 NT communities with government community education centres. These are: Alekarenge, Angurugu, Borroloola, Gapuwiyak, Gunbalanya, Kalkaringi, Lajamanu, Maningrida, Milingimbi, Ramingining, Ngukurr, Shepherdson College, Numbulwar, Yirrkala and Yuendumu. Over the next four years, there will be a concerted effort to provide effective education from preschool through to senior secondary in each of these centres, with students able to progress from there to tertiary or vocational education and training opportunities, or directly to employment. The community engagement approach will emphasise the reciprocal responsibilities of DEET and of community members.

The Northern Territory and Australian Governments have put in place a number of initiatives to ensure that government business is contributing to building stronger regions in the Northern Territory. The Council of Australian Government (COAG) trial site in the Northern Territory is Wadeye. DEET is working with the Wadeye community and government departments at the NT and Australian government levels to ensure appropriate responses to community identified issues. The Northern Territory Government's *Stronger Regions – Stronger Futures* Strategy provides a framework for DEET to work with communities to ensure employment, training and education services contribute to strong regional development.

DEET recently developed a Community Engagement Charter outlining the guiding principles to ensure that community engagement is inclusive, responsive and progressive. The Charter provides the framework for DEET to work with communities to provide and gain information and knowledge and to promote the active participation of communities in contributing to policy initiatives and service delivery.

## SUMMARY

Recommendation numbers	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
142 – 151	4			6

Learning Lessons recommended the establishment of Self Managing Schools. This has been superseded by a partnership approach between school communities, school staff and DEET. During 2006 and 2007 DEET will employ external consultants to develop contracts in the 15 Northern Territory communities that have Community Education Centres. The contracts will be based on negotiated explicit mutual obligations. Some of the obligations include strategies for working with parents and guardians in the community, local employment plans for the school, arrangements for community participation in school governance, and infrastructure plans for educational facilities in the community.

In order to ensure Indigenous input into education at the highest levels, a Northern Territory Indigenous Education Council is being established. It will have its own terms of reference and will take forward the work of the Learning Lessons Implementation Steering Committee.

### **Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008**

To this end, the *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008* outlines the following future action:

#### **Stakeholder Agreements and Partnerships**

*Priority Action 4: Develop Local School and Community Charters for the larger remote centres to help the Indigenous community and school work closer together*

## SECTION III THE LEARNING LESSONS IMPLEMENTATION STEERING COMMITTEE

Over the past three years, the 14 member Learning Lessons Implementation Steering Committee (LLISC) has provided advice and direction to guide the implementation of Learning Lessons. The work of the committee has laid the foundations for further improvements in Indigenous education. In a sense, the LLISC has developed a platform for future Indigenous education initiatives. Progress can occur and accelerate, once there are the necessary preconditions.

Over the course of its tenure, the LLISC met a total of 13 times. The work of the LLISC is a public record accessible on the internet via:  
[http://www.deet.nt.gov.au/education/indigenous\\_education/llisc.shtml](http://www.deet.nt.gov.au/education/indigenous_education/llisc.shtml)

The scope of committee's influence was large. The committee concerned itself with both large policy issues and local school issues. The committee made recommendations to both the Minister and to DEET and its wide ranging focus and influence was one of its strengths. For example, in one meeting, the LLISC covered a breadth of issues including though not limited to, data collection, health screening, music programs, school attendance officers, alternative education programs, petrol sniffing and the sharing of information across agencies.

Over the four year period, the LLISC made a total of 46 recommendations to the Minister. Forty one recommendations were endorsed and had resultant action. Five recommendations have not had any resultant action. The Committee also made recommendations to DEET and to its secretariat. All of the 166 recommendations have had resultant action. The status of the LLISC recommendations is summarised in Chart 12 below.

**CHART 12: LLISC RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NT MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, DEET, AND THE LLISC SECRETARIAT 2002 – 2004**

Recommendations made by LLISC to:	Number of recommendations	Number of recommendations Approved by Minister	Number of recommendations from Minister to DEET for action	DEET Implemented	DEET Outstanding
Minister	46	46	45	40	5
DEET	69			66	3
Secretariat	97	-	-	97	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>212</b>			<b>203</b>	<b>8</b>

## SECTION IV FUTURE ACTION TO IMPROVE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Learning Lessons has had an important impact on the functioning of DEET. One of the greatest impacts of the review has been the changes to the ways in which DEET manages its information systems. DEET now generates reports that describe an accurate picture of Indigenous student enrolment status, school participation rates and educational achievements. This makes DEET a far more accountable organisation to Indigenous education stakeholders because Indigenous student data is now used to target resources appropriately and to support schools and students in most need. Student achievement and attendance data is also available in schools. School management and staff know how their student cohort is performing, and therefore what performance targets to set for successive years.

NT government schools are now in a position to communicate this information to Indigenous communities, parents and carers. In some instances, this is already happening. As Learning Lessons pointed out, previous to 1999, many Indigenous parents and community members were unaware of the poor academic performance of their children. Indigenous community members wanted accurate information so that they could plan for the future and set realistic goals for each student and for the community. There is now accurate information to set these goals.

The vision statement of the new Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008 below underlies one of the most important messages of Learning Lessons.

*The vision of this plan is for young Indigenous people to fully influence and participate in the social and economic future of the Northern Territory and the wider Australian community*

The new Northern Territory Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008 focuses on the importance of developing relationships at a range of levels - between teachers and students, schools and their communities, schools and DEET, and finally, DEET and the NT and Australian government agencies. Improving Indigenous education relies on all parties working in tandem, pooling resources and providing the same message about the importance and value of education.

The NTIEC will assist to implement this vision. The following suggested recommendations may provide the new NTIEC with an opportunity to finalise outstanding work from the Learning Lessons report.

**The NTIEC has a role to:**

- 1 Monitor and request information from DEET about the provision of housing for remote Indigenous recruits with full teaching qualifications.
- 2 Advocate for improved school infrastructure in remote NT. There is scope for the NTIEC to advocate a bilateral agreement on infrastructure between the NT and the Australian Governments.
- 3 Request information from DEET about the Indigenous teacher mentoring program.
- 4 Request information about DEET's future intentions to assess school administrative arrangements that currently do not incorporate Indigenous communities of affiliation or communities with shared languages. The current school Cluster arrangements make it difficult for some schools that share a common language to utilise formal communication channels and to access training and development funds so that they can work together.
- 5 Request information about existing legislation covering student school attendance, and request information about the roles and responsibilities of various government departments in this matter. The NTIEC may use this information as a beginning point to survey the options for future strategies to improve student school attendance.

NOTE: All data in this report was sourced from DEET

## APPENDIX A

### LEARNING LESSONS IMPLEMENTATION STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER LIST

#### **Original members**

Honourable Bob Collins

Ms Pat Anderson

Ms Beverley Angeles

Ms Carmelita Sceney

Mr Akarriyuwu Hill

Mrs Kilipayuwu Puruntatameri

Mr David Ross

Mr Patrick Puruntatameri

Ms Valda Shannon

Mrs Didamain Uibo

Mr Shane Williams

Mr Warren Williams

Ms Katherine Henderson

Mr John Glasby

Ms Dorothy Morrison

Mr Greg Gibbs

for Katherine Henderson

for Carmelita Sceney

for Shane Williams

## APPENDIX B

### IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE 151 LEARNING LESSONS RECOMMENDATIONS 2005

	Recommendation	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
R1	In order to be inclusive of all Indigenous Australians, the Aboriginal Education Branch be renamed the Indigenous Education Branch, consistent with the new peak body, the Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory.				1
R2	The term 'Indigenous' should be used in all instances to inclusively reflect both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.				1
R3	The Multilevel Assessment Program (MAP) tests be retained.				1
R4	Effort is made to provide professional development programs to teachers to support their understanding of the different purposes of testing and assessment.				1
R5	NTDE develops means of making feedback of the results of MAP data meaningful and accessible to Indigenous parents, in line with their clearly stated interest in comparative information.				1
R6	An information strategy is implemented to ensure the national benchmarking process is clearly explained to parents and school-based staff.				1
R7	Work is commenced immediately on the school council reports of MAP results to: replace the dense introductory text with understandable information; ensure that the results stand out clearly and are meaningfully represented; provide clear explanations of what the profile levels are meant to mean.				1
R8	The revised MAP reporting format for school councils is tested with Indigenous people in remote areas for clarity and accessibility.				1
R9	Schools explore alternative models of communicating student progress to parents, noting the good practice examples that already exist in schools.				1
R10	NTDE issues a clear statement establishing reasonable expectations for a student being tested in a language in which the student has limited proficiency; when ESL students should be expected to be ready to undertake the same assessments as first-language English speakers;# whether it is possible to establish common benchmarks for ESL and first-language English speakers and test for these.				1
R11	ESL levels in the NTCF are mandated for use by teachers as a means of both mapping and ensuring the progress of identified ESL students.				1
R12	NTDE urgently evaluates the mandating of mathematics and English profiles for remote area Indigenous students in the light of the Curriculum Review Recommendation 38 and provides clear direction for schools on their use.				1
R13	Secondary schools ensure that parents are given accessible, meaningful and relevant information on the educational progress of their children and the course options available.				1
R14	School annual reports be the key mechanism for the school's accountability within the system.				1
R15	School annual reports have a relentless focus on student outcomes.				1
R16	NTDE ensures these annual reports are responded to by senior management with critical analysis, both positive and negative, of the school's performance.				1
R17	NTDE ensures there is an unequivocal outcomes-based approach applied across the whole of Indigenous education supported by objective assessment using agreed system-wide benchmarks.				1
R18	Schools and principals increase their efforts to use the data to explain to parents and children consequences of educational decisions made on their behalf.				1
R19	NTDE harnesses the advancing wave of communications capacity coming with the new communications systems and services to network all schools including major remote sites.				1

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Superseded</b>	<b>Not Commenced</b>	<b>Partially Implemented</b>	<b>Completed</b>
R20	NTDE integrates the implementation and support of remote communications and desktop service provision to schools with other Northern Territory Government (NTG) agencies, e.g. Territory Health Services (THS), Police, Department of Corporate and Information Services (DCIS) and local councils and the community.	1			
R21	NTDE implements a comprehensive student tracking system allowing Indigenous students to be traced through the system and ensure their achievements are recorded.			1	
R22	NTDE investigates the opportunities to share the client tracking systems developed by THS for its community health systems and the Education Department of Western Australia.	1			
R23	NTDE ensures that any new resource Management Capacity satisfy the basic outcome data requirements to track outcomes for Indigenous students and be scaled to allow remote schools with minimal technical and administrative support to be full players.			1	
R24	NTDE works closely with Northern Territory University (NTU), Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) and other training organisations to ensure that all teachers have a minimum level of computer literacy and related teaching competencies.				1
R25	NTDE institutes and resources dedicated cross-program project teams to share resources with other NTG agencies and harness Federal Government funding in partnership with Indigenous management to improve access to information technology & telecommunication (IT & T) systems in remote areas.			1	
R26	The NTDE Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program (IESIP) Review team clarify which IESIP funds are being used as substitute funding.				1
R27	Future allocations under IESIP or equivalent funding programs are used as top-up to address the huge gap in outcomes after NTDE funds have been distributed fairly on a per capita basis and weighted for needs.				1
R28	The current system of thirty-two managers for IESIP programs be immediately discontinued and replaced with coordination of the NTDE IESIP program being the responsibility of the Aboriginal Education Branch.				1
R29	IESIP initiatives clearly demonstrate their contribution to the enhancement of educational outcomes for Indigenous students.				1
R30	The revised IESIP programs have a clear focus on attendance, English oracy, literacy and numeracy.				1
R31	As a matter of urgency, a submission to Treasury is made to reduce the on-cost component of employing people under the IESIP.				1
R32	The savings are directed into targeted programs for Indigenous education in schools.				1
R33	NTDE and Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) renegotiate the strategies and reporting requirements for IESIP in line with meeting the key recommendations of this review.				1
R34	NTDE work with DETYA and Centrelink to clarify the nature of the Abstudy Program.	1			
R35	NTDE institutes financial Management Capacity and processes to allow accurate measurement of the resource inputs and requirements at a region, school, subject, program and ultimately student level.			1	
R36	Branch directors, principals and all senior managers are trained to be competent in comprehending, analysing and acting upon such financial management and resource information.				1
R37	NTDE senior management review regular management reports on staff turnover, relief provision, and other areas of resource loss and require all managers as part of their performance appraisal to commit to percentage improvements in these areas.			1	
R38	NTDE ensures that the management reporting systems that are put in place are pragmatic and driven by a benefits orientation and meet the business and information needs of managers within schools.				1
R39	NTDE seeks agreement from the Commonwealth to allocate funding on the basis of need, not category.				1

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Superseded</b>	<b>Not Commenced</b>	<b>Partially Implemented</b>	<b>Completed</b>
R40	NTDE, as part of a whole-of-government effort, uses a measure such as the Griffith Service Access Frame (GSAF) in all negotiations with the Commonwealth.				1
R41	The processes for repairs and maintenance are streamlined, with more discretion given to the principals to have items fixed on the spot.				1
R42	Comprehensive effort is made to bring all schools to an acceptable standard with the subsequent repairs and maintenance allocation to schools calculated as a percentage of the total asset value, ensuring that this does not disadvantage poorly equipped schools.			1	
R43	The Building Assets Maintenance Schedule (BAMS) priorities for repairs and maintenance are developed in consultation with principals, are related to action plans for school improvement and closely followed by comprehensive action.			1	
R44	In recognition that principals are not usually skilled maintenance supervisors and a centralised approach to small-scale remote locality issues is unworkable, that community-based agencies are considered as the preferred maintenance providers where quality and cost-effectiveness can be assured. An additional benefit of this approach is enhancement of community self-management and increased capacity to offer ongoing employment opportunities at the local level.				1
R45	NTDE develops a strategic plan for infrastructure incorporating the key goals of this review. This would encompass: school plans and community commitments to increasing attendance anticipating the planning recommended (under 'Access and provision') for secondary provisions and multipurpose early childhood centres a rolling program to ensure that over the next five years, all school facilities will be brought to an agreed standard disability and health needs being integrated within the designs that new facilities in their design encompass the goals of having education as a lifetime resource for all age groups, and are places that are welcoming to all community members.			1	
R46	Existing areas of chronic teacher housing shortfall are redressed as a matter of urgency.			1	
R47	Remote area housing is brought to an accepted level of amenity.			1	
R48	Cabinet Decision 2454 is amended to allow the staggered introduction of teacher housing in remote areas for local recruits who have full teaching qualifications.		1		
R49	Pursuant to the Northern Territory Government's interest in Indigenous professional development and greater community level responsibility for service delivery, Cabinet Decision 2454 is considered to apply to local recruits from other agencies, especially Northern Territory Police and Territory Health Services, where those recruits have appropriate qualifications. That is, consideration should be given to supplying government housing to qualified local Indigenous police officers, nurses and doctors under negotiated arrangements with the appropriate community agencies.	1			
R50	The Government concern that such a strategy will increase the expectations of other local public sector employees in remote communities is addressed with a public information strategy which clearly explains the rationale and eligibility criteria.			1	
R51	In view of the high costs involved, negotiation with the Commonwealth is essential.			1	
R52	A comprehensive professional development program for principals is developed, and implemented, providing business management and public sector leadership training and addressing the separate needs of Indigenous principals and senior school staff.				1
R53	In conjunction with the Self-Managing Schools Program, principals be given control of notional staffing budgets by devolving funding to school councils to allow greater recruitment flexibility and community control.	1			
R54	Principal positions are advertised nationally to attract the widest field possible.				1
R55	A program is embarked on by NTDE to articulate to school principals the strategy of moving Indigenous education to core business and to ensure this				1

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Superseded</b>	<b>Not Commenced</b>	<b>Partially Implemented</b>	<b>Completed</b>
	shift is actioned within schools.				
R56	NTDE develops performance agreements with principals which build these departmental expectations into contractual arrangements, including minimally, requirements to improve Indigenous student attendance, learning outcomes and relationships with the community.				1
R57	The titles 'Head Teacher' and 'Teacher in Charge' be changed to 'Principal'.				1
R58	NTDE notes the successes within the Education Department of Western Australia and Territory Health Services in significantly reducing staff turnover, and learns from these and other such initiatives to establish a comprehensive recruitment and employment strategy which enables rigorous recruitment tied to performance outcomes.				1
R59	In the first instance the NTDE engages professional recruitment consultants to establish the recruitment criteria and processes required, and to assist with the design and development of the overall strategy.				1
R60	Care is taken to avoid creating new categories of high staff turnover schools in regional areas not within defined categories of remoteness in determinations of hard-to-staff schools developed under the total recruitment strategy.				1
R61	NTDE exercises its power as a purchaser of services from tertiary institutions to specify the skills set required by the department for its schools and negotiate service-level agreements with Northern Territory University (NTU), the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) or other providers to meet the professional development and training needs of its staff.			1	
R62	NTDE negotiates with the tertiary sector to increase the scope and adequacy of ESL training at the undergraduate level.				1
R63	NTDE orientation and cross-cultural training programs be reviewed urgently with a view to increasing the local area content and applicability of the information acquired, and to take account of relevant cross-departmental work and interstate initiatives.				1
R64	Schools/clusters are allocated discretionary funds enabling employment of suitable local people to provide cross-cultural community induction.				1
R65	The option of outsourcing urban area cross-cultural training is investigated and that suitable training providers with an established track record be engaged to fulfil the mandated Northern Territory Public Service (NTPS) requirements to provide effective cross-cultural preparation.				1
R66	NTDE implements a strategic plan for staff development related to the requirements for improving Indigenous education across the board.			1	
R67	NTDE develops and implements a strategy to achieve universal coverage in ESL methodologies for all teachers across all schooling types – early childhood through to secondary – within a period of five years.			1	
R68	In the initial period, the department should precisely specify its particular ESL training requirements and establish a clear plan analysing the workforce and the current levels of training, specifying the different groups that need different levels of input, and determining how and when the gaps will be filled against performance targets.			1	
R69	NTDE develops options for providing intensive short course training in ESL.				1
R70	NTDE develops and implements a strategy to vigorously pursue an increase in the number of Indigenous teachers and Indigenous people involved with schools in an official and paid capacity as the best long-term solution for addressing high teacher turnover and to support a major recommendation of this review to achieve the active involvement of Indigenous people in the control and delivery of their own education services.			1	
R71	NTDE increases the proportion of Indigenous staff in senior non-school-based administrative positions.			1	
R72	The para-professional role of the assistant teacher is explicitly recognised and supported with appropriate training.			1	
R73	Staffing formulas are revised to ensure that all remote area teachers share the same entitlements to assistant teachers; and to ensure an assistant				1

	Recommendation	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
	teacher presence in secondary classes.				
R74	The IESIP review fully evaluate the current allocation, mix and location of AIEW/ARO positions and that increased IESIP resources be directed toward this program in 2000 and for the quadrennium 2001-2004 – the IESIP review should have regard to the need to maintain the flexibility between permanent and part-time positions.				1
R75	In the light of the high value placed on the educational return for students of the work of these staff and their continuing professional development, that the NTDE move to progressively incorporate these positions into the core business funding of the department.			1	
R76	NTDE develops and implements an intense and structured effort to support the skilling of Indigenous staff especially in the area of teaching English as a second or foreign language.			1	
R77	The mentoring program is continued and expanded.				1
R78	NTDE negotiates with NTETA to provide a greater level of funding for AIEW professional development.				1
R79	The department enters into agreements with training providers such as the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) and provide the release time and support for their staff seeking to gain initial qualifications, to undertake inservice training, or to upgrade their qualifications.			1	
R80	There be an increase in the exposure of all Indigenous children to early literacy and numeracy learning in vernacular where appropriate and Standard Australian English oracy.			1	
R81	NTDE investigates joint funding arrangements with Territory Health Services, DETYA and the Federal Department of Family and Children's Services to develop play centres and distribute reading and pre-literacy material and educational play equipment to all sites that are accessible to parents and children, for example, health clinics and women's centres. This would build on the THS-NTDE Framework Agreement on the Provision of Early Childhood and Outside School Hours Care Services for Young Territory Children (NTDE/THS 1999).				1
R82	Mobile preschools and playgroups are considered as interim solutions to ensure guaranteed access for all children to structured early childhood education.				1
R83	Sufficient funding is sought to enhance the key role libraries play in the development of literacy outcomes for Indigenous students and opportunities for coordinated service development and a coordinated approach to funding are explored.			1	
R84	Within a period of five years, there be guaranteed access to play centres and preschools for all children in the three to five year age group.			1	
R85	New facilities for infants and toddlers should be designed with the aim of establishing multipurpose early childhood centres that offer infant health and other early childhood services. Such centres would not need to be administered by the school but could be run by other suitable organisations.			1	
R86	The multipurpose early childhood centres incorporate childcare facilities for Indigenous school staff and young mothers who are still students.			1	
R87	NTDE explores means of expanding the number of secondary courses that are available in remote areas and staffing them appropriately.			1	
R88	Within six months, the NTDE develops policy recommendations on secondary programs which provide for options for: # providing secondary programs to all Indigenous secondary-age students, with secondary trained teachers supported by ESL specialists; # conversion of community education centres to area school secondary providers, i.e. able to implement board approved special category and mainstream secondary curriculum, which are staffed accordingly; # the assessment of large rural schools that fall outside of the CEC category for their potential conversion to area school status; # a reassessment of remote area secondary school staff formula determinations; # expansion of the hostel arrangements currently operating successfully in Tennant Creek and Katherine and exploration of the options for providing high-quality state-of-the art IT&T support for distance			1	

	Recommendation	Superseded	Not Commenced	Partially Implemented	Completed
	learning;# and identification of overall resource requirements.				
R89	Within twelve months NTDE has a clear policy on increasing secondary options to the end of the compulsory years for all Indigenous students, urban and remote.				1
R90	The vocational education and training funding and resource agreements between NTETA and registered training organisations be comprehensively reviewed.				1
R91	As a transitional measure, NTETA should move to significantly expand the funds available to the Flexible Response Funding program from within its existing global budgets.				1
R92	In consulting with a community on its training requirements, that NTETA directly involves the school principal and the educational board if that has been established in that region/community.				1
R93	There is a permanently based adult education provider presence at community level where appropriate. In this regard, the initiatives being taken by the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education should be supported.	1			
R94	AITAP is supported with a continuing effort made to encourage the greater involvement in the program by remote students, including those attending urban residential colleges and high schools.	1			
R95	The impending Student Services Review examines the provision of student services and special education to Indigenous students in the Northern Territory, as a specific term of reference.				1
R96	The impending Student Services Review considers equity of service provision for students with special needs.				1
R97	The impending Student Services Review makes recommendations on the facilities required and costs involved to ensure all schools are catering for hearing impairment and levels of physical disability in Indigenous students as design requirements.			1	
R98	NTDE supports 'two-way learning' programs in schools where the local community wants such a program, and assessment demonstrating the essential elements for its effective delivery are in place.			1	
R99	The initial assessment, and any ongoing assessment, must be dispassionate, rigorous and unequivocally focused on agreed outcomes.			1	
R100	NTDE issues a formal policy document which clearly states the NTDE policy of support for 'two-way learning', affirming the value of Indigenous language and culture and highlighting the importance of learning of Standard Australian English oracy and literacy as a crucial element of the schooling process.			1	
R101	The teaching framework adopted to support 'two-way learning' needs to be flexible enough to incorporate in a soundly based educational program the individual situations and requirements of different communities.			1	
R102	NTDE urgently commissions high-level research into the use of vernacular in Indigenous schools to develop the most appropriate pedagogy to support effective learning in this environment. A comprehensive analysis as part of this research must establish what is required to ensure effective exposure to Standard Australian English oracy and literacy takes place, while supporting vernacular language development. The research undertaken must be focused on improving outcomes.			1	

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Superseded</b>	<b>Not Commenced</b>	<b>Partially Implemented</b>	<b>Completed</b>
R103	NTDE explores all possible avenues of increasing the exposure of Indigenous students to spoken Standard Australian English.				1
R104	As an immediate measure, NTDE with DETYA progressively extend the ESL ILSS program across all primary years.				1
R105	Urgent priority is given to develop strategies to improve the unacceptably low attendance of enrolled ESL ILSS students.				1
R106	Indigenous viewpoints, perceptions and expectations about social, cultural and historical matters are reflected in the curricula, teaching and administration of all NT schools.				1
R107	NTDE examines options for producing high-quality curriculum material, which would add to the understanding by students everywhere of the value of our unique Indigenous cultures and languages and their interaction with Western culture.			1	
R108	Options for extending the IAD Languages in Schools Program are explored.	1			
R109	NTDE develops a strategy for all schools, in the face of high turnover, and uniquely challenging teaching conditions, which detail how language acquisition programs are delivered in the school.				1
R110	NTDE ensures quality materials are available and information on guided reading schemes is available within all schools. This includes the potential of electronic media.			1	
R111	Particular focus is placed on appropriate material relevant to secondary-age Indigenous students.				1
R112	NTDE explores options for making this material available to parents and not just restricted to teachers and schools.			1	
R113	A Strategic Support Unit be established to provide critical management advice on student services.				1
R114	A Service Level Agreement between NTDE and the Northern Territory Library and Information Service is established to clarify expectations regarding services to be provided to remote school libraries-as well as urban school libraries. Key issues to be considered include the level and nature of services, funding for resources and the appropriate use of joint use facilities.			1	
R115	NTDE rationalises literature production centres and explore opportunities to retain text production, graphics and illustration in communities and have publication tasks completed elsewhere.	1			
R116	Literature production centres shift their focus to take advantage of contemporary technologies.	1			
117	A comprehensive attendance strategy is developed as a matter of urgent priority, building on the range of useful practices already being implemented in individual schools.				1
R118	A developed comprehensive attendance strategy be a critical element of the partnership agreements under Self-Managing Schools Program (see Conclusion).	1			
R119	NTDE recognises that there are communities of affiliation between which students and families will move in a patterned way and organise its administration to better align with these affiliated communities.				1
R120	NTDE draws on other agency data and liaises with the various land councils and other relevant organisations, e.g. the community controlled health sector and outstation resource centres to better map and anticipate population movements.	1			
R121	NTDE implements student tracking systems that allow teachers to more freely exchange student information between such communities of affiliation, to improve the education continuity for the student.			1	
R122	NTDE organises school clusters to correspond with patterns of visiting and residence.			1	
R123	NTDE ensures that affiliated schools work collaboratively to share information, jointly plan program delivery, coordinate school services and professional development support, and are consulted as a regional grouping for administrative and policy considerations.			1	

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Superseded</b>	<b>Not Commenced</b>	<b>Partially Implemented</b>	<b>Completed</b>
R124	Infant health interventions are introduced within the multipurpose early childhood centres recommended by this review.			1	
R125	Health objectives are incorporated within school action plans and principal performance management agreements, to ensure the links are maintained in practice as well as theory.			1	
R126	Community service agreements are established between the school and the community health centre.			1	
R127	Teachers are trained and supported for their health and community development role.				1
R128	All teachers receive training and support in appropriate teaching practices for students with hearing impairments.				1
R129	Benchmark standards for classroom acoustics for students with hearing disabilities and for all Indigenous ESL students are established in collaboration with Territory Health Services, the Australian Government Hearing Laboratory and the Menzies School of Health Research.			1	
R130	A systematic plan is developed, resourced and implemented to upgrade classroom acoustics in accordance with these standards to create sound listening and learning environments for Indigenous students.			1	
R131	NTDE clarifies and defines what is categorised as attendance and makes this the standard measure across all schools.				1
R132	NTDE commissions work to cost and develop a comprehensive approach to the tracking of all children to enable tracking of multiple target groups supporting the recommendations under 'Mobility.'			1	
R133	The data enables disaggregation to target areas most in need.				1
R134	Systems be developed to allow daily participation for Indigenous students to be reliably monitored.			1	
R135	All data allows separate analysis of Indigenous attendance and outcomes.				1
R136	Attendance information be routinely included in educational outcomes reports to allow key variables to be distinguished.				1
R137	NTDE adopts alternate enumeration methods to calculate and report real participation rates.				1
R138	NTDE establishes an agreed population estimate for a particular community via negotiations between the school, health centre and other agencies and organisations with a strong community presence, including housing, local government and the local community council.			1	
R139	As a matter of urgency, school transfer and appointments data are analysed to give senior management an immediate and contemporary portrait of staff turnover and the cost to the department to benchmark the impact of wider reforms arising out of this review.			1	
R140	Resources are dedicated to ensure historical information is included in the Teacher Information System as a matter of priority.	1			
R141	Reduction in teacher turnover is a formal performance indicator and is regularly reported on at senior management level.				1
R142	The IECNT be completely restructured.				1
R143	In the event of the Government not supporting this major recommendation at this time, the imminent reappointment of the existing council not proceed and a thorough review be conducted on behalf of the Northern Territory Government and Commonwealth Government.				1
R144	The Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory be established as a partnership between NTDE, the Northern Territory tertiary sector, ATSIC, and the land councils. All parties must be represented on the council at senior level.				1
R145	The council develops broad policy parameters for Indigenous education across all schools, provides advice to the Minister and DETYA and oversees the budget for the delivery of the Self-Managing Schools Program.				1

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Superseded</b>	<b>Not Commenced</b>	<b>Partially Implemented</b>	<b>Completed</b>
R146	An immediate responsibility of the council is to oversee and support the establishment of the pilots of the Self-Managing Schools Program and progressively extend these arrangements across the Northern Territory.	1			
R147					1
R148	The council be responsible for overseeing the implementation of agreed recommendations of this review.				1
R149	The pilot Self-Managing Schools Program be established under the auspices of the Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory.	1			
R150	The program framework be flexible enough to allow community or regionally based arrangements incorporating the individual requirements of the communities concerned.	1			
R151	The program takes every opportunity to work in partnership with other community-controlled initiatives.	1			
		<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>82</b>