

# Palmerston Secondary Special Education School – Project Update

## Project summary

The Northern Territory (NT) Government is building a new secondary special education school in Palmerston. The school is being purpose built and will provide an inclusive learning environment for up to 200 students in Years 7–12 with additional needs.

On 8 September 2025, the NT Government announced that the school would be co-located with Rosebery Secondary School and constructed on the existing oval.

On 27 April 2026, the NT Government announced that \$110 million had been allocated for construction of the school and shared proposed designs.

The tender to identify a developer to finalise the detailed design and oversee construction will be released in June 2026.

The aim is for the school to open in Term 1, 2029.

## School design

The design of the new school has been informed by an Expert Design Advisory Group (EDAG) working with the Department of Education and Training, Department of Logistics and Infrastructure, and Department of People, Sport and Culture.

The design draws on Henbury School as an exemplar and integrates best practice modern design features.

The design includes:

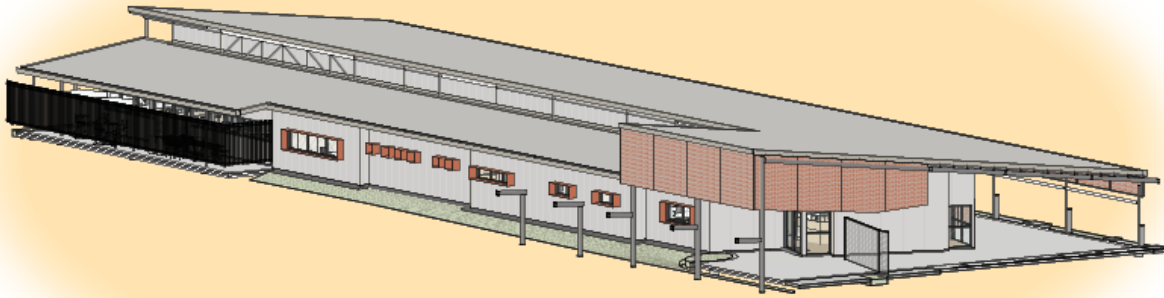
- an administration building
- 25 general learning areas (classrooms) across 5 teaching blocks
- a pool facility, multi-purpose hall and a range of outdoor spaces with grassed play areas, play equipment and sensory spaces
- a range of specialist learning areas including a music room and home economics rooms, a technology and arts building, maintenance, recycling and horticultural buildings plus an on-site farm. As with the Henbury School, a partnership with Woolworths is being put in place for a mini-Woolworths store to support training in retail skills
- establishment of a grassed playing field for use by Rosebery Secondary school and the special school.

The proposed design is shown in the following aerial perspective and site plan.

# Palmerston Secondary Special Education School – project update



Providing an inclusive learning environment for years 7-12



Administration building



## Stakeholder consultation

In November 2025, the NT Government presented early design drawings to families that may use the school in the future. Families that were unable to attend the consultation in-person were invited to provide feedback and design suggestions via an online form that was open until 31 January 2026.

Feedback on the early design proposal was positive, with support provided for:

- modelling the school off Henbury School
- specialist facilities such as the pool and multi-purpose hall, and
- inclusion of dedicated spaces for work experience opportunities and vocational training.

Families told the design team how important outdoor areas and sensory spaces are, and subsequent design improvements were made that re-aligned building layout to increase outdoor space, including wider grassed playing areas and a variety of sensory areas and play equipment.

Other recommendations that have been incorporated into the design and future operational planning include:

- Streamlined arrangements for drop off and pick up, noting the need for an effective kiss and go system, with options for undercover parking.

# Palmerston Secondary Special Education School – project update

- Traffic management solutions to avoid congestion across the schools, noting the proximity of the special school, Rosebery Secondary School and Rosebery Primary School.
- Clear signage with well-marked entrances and directional signs throughout the school.
- Indoor and outdoor spaces that encourage movement, sensory exploration, creativity and downtime, supported by calming green areas and gardens.
- Facilities that accommodate high-needs students, including wheelchair accessibility throughout all classrooms, wide doorways, handrails, ramps and accessible nature play areas.
- Adequate onsite medical facilities and capability to care for students with complex health needs.
- Safety measures, including secure fencing and safe spaces within classrooms to manage behavioural incidents.
- An enterprise-style café/retail learning environment (similar to Henbury’s café) as part of vocational learning, noting it could also support community connection if safely managed.
- Consultation with families on the level of collaboration with the mainstream school, noting that integration is encouraged, but with operational separation to maintain safety and privacy.
- A strategy for recruiting and upskilling staff well in advance of the school’s opening.

## Project information

Project updates will be provided via:

- Department of Education and Training – <https://education.nt.gov.au/statistics-research-and-strategies/secondary-reform-program/palmerston-secondary-special-education-school>
- Department of Logistics and Infrastructure (construction specific updates) – <https://dli.nt.gov.au/projects>

Construction updates will include important changes to conditions in and around the site that may affect the local community, including schools, residents and nearby businesses, such as changed traffic conditions and access points.

If you have questions about the project, please contact:

- [secondary.reform@education.nt.gov.au](mailto:secondary.reform@education.nt.gov.au)
- or call 8999 5692