

growing success together



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2018

2016 Key Actions



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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to present the Department of Education's 2016-2018 Strategic Plan, Growing Success Together.

The plan provides the strategic direction for education and children's services in the Northern Territory for the next three years. It supports the Government's Framing the Future agenda of improving the social and economic circumstances of people in the Northern Territory, particularly in remote communities and building a strong society with a robust economy and prosperous outlook.

Quality education is the key to positive participation of Territorians in our community and it is important that learning commences early in life. That is why this department will focus significant effort in the early years, working with families and our partners to ensure young people have the best possible start to schooling.

This plan builds on the work we have been doing and outlines the priorities that we as an agency will work towards to achieve our vision to deliver educational services to young Territorians to become confident and capable global citizens.

Our focus continues to be ensuring that every student in the Northern Territory can and does access a quality education and to achieve this we are continuing to implement significant government policy initiatives. We will focus on delivering programs that challenge our students to achieve above expected results and be competitive nationally.

We will continue to focus on improving the outcomes of Indigenous Territorians, with the implementation of A share in the future - Indigenous Education Strategy 2015-2024.

We will implement our Every Day Counts attendance strategy working with other government agencies to address barriers to, and improve school attendance.

To ensure students in the middle years of schooling are successful and prepared for transitioning to their final years of schooling, recommendations of the Middle Years Review will be implemented to ensure these students are well supported.

In building our relationships with our Asian neighbours, we will continue to implement the International Education and Training Strategy 2014-2024. We will also continue to foster our existing productive and collaborative partnerships with a range of stakeholders including the non-government school and child care sectors.

The plan shows our commitment to improving the opportunities in education from birth through to adulthood to achieve the best possible educational outcomes and pathways for children and young people in the Northern Territory. It forms the basis of our accountability to Territorians for the services we deliver. We will measure our performance and publicly report on our progress.

We will continue to focus on developing leaders and our Indigenous workforce across the department, optimise use of our resources and provide flexible and contemporary options for service delivery to ensure all children and young people have access to quality education and training programs.

I look forward to working together to deliver improved services that better meet the needs of children, young people and their families.

Ken Davies



Katherine High School

OUR CONTEXT

The Department of Education provides education services to over 33 000 school aged children across the Northern Territory's 151 government schools, providing programs from the early years to post schooling pathways. The Department of Education also supports and regulates non-government schools and child care services.

In the Territory, 73 per cent of government schools are located in remote and very remote areas and 47 per cent of our students are enrolled at these schools.

We are prepared to meet challenges to service delivery through flexible and innovative programs, including access to high class online learning services delivered through the Northern Territory Open Education Centre.

Education programs are delivered by over 3 500 dedicated staff working in our schools to support young Territorians to reach their potential and are supported by over 600 staff providing systems and services that support them to deliver quality education.

Reforms to improve outcomes for disadvantaged, Indigenous and remote young people are a major priority for the Northern Territory, and our activity is aligned to the national reform agenda being driven in collaboration with the Australian Government.

The Strategic Plan sets out the department's agenda for achieving its part in the Government's higher level strategic plan, Framing the Future.

OUR VISION

Young Territorians are confident and capable global citizens

We will work with families, communities and other key stakeholders to deliver quality educational services for young people across the Territory. We will ensure our services reflect current and future social and economic needs of the Territory, and that our services and systems are responsive to the needs of our communities and schools. Through our commitment to providing higher quality education services, we will assist young people to become confident and capable global citizens.

OUR STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

The Strategic Plan has been built around five strategic principles:

- 1. Education is a vehicle that will drive social and economic advancement for the Territory.
- 2. Resourcing decisions are based on effective, evidence based practices and ensure high expectations are maintained and student outcomes are improved.
- 3. Service quality and efficiency is enhanced through contemporary, flexible and innovative delivery models.
- 4. Decisions are best made and resources have most impact closest to the point of service delivery in schools.
- 5. Autonomy is balanced by consistent and system-wide effort and accountability.

OUR VALUES

Values underpin our organisational culture and behaviour. They guide staff in the Department of Education to deliver quality services to Territorians, and to achieve our best performance at work.

Our values are:

Professionalism

We are an organisation with a strong performance agenda that expects the highest of standards of ethical practice and transparency. Staff work with integrity and accountability to deliver high quality services and advice.

Respect

We value respect as an essential foundation for working collaboratively with others. Our day to day interactions with students, colleagues, parents and stakeholders are conducted honestly and respectfully.

Innovation

We are adaptive, proactive and innovative to achieve the best results for young Territorians. We work together in our schools and workplaces to find new approaches to meeting challenges in an ever-changing environment.

Diversity

We provide culturally inclusive and responsive services to meet the needs of the Northern Territory's diverse population. We create inclusive work and learning environments where people are valued for their cultures, experiences, skills, knowledge and capabilities.

Excellence

We have high expectations of our people, children and students to strive to achieve their best. Staff work efficiently and effectively to achieve high standards and support students to achieve their learning goals.

OUR ACCOUNTABILITY

Our Strategic Plan reflects Government's *Framing the Future* priorities and sets out the goals and strategies to achieve our vision to educate young Territorians to become confident and capable global citizens. Our goals and strategies are translated into actions through division and directorate plans; into business unit and school plans; and then into individual staff plans.

We monitor and report our performance against the strategic goals through a clearly defined accountability framework that publicly reports progress every six months.

We regularly review our progress against key actions, assessing risks to achievement of these and applying risk mitigation strategies.

We analyse our performance and use evidence based practice to inform planning of future actions and investment.

We are transparent and accountable to the community by reporting our agency performance each year, including the performance of our people and our financial position.

Nhulunbuy Primary School



OUR GOALS

A great start for children

We are committed to working with families to support the early development of children to provide them with the best possible start in life so they begin school ready to learn.

Every student a successful learner

We are committed to creating opportunities and the environment for successful learning for every student in every school.

Quality leaders, quality educators, quality learning

We are committed to fostering a strong and collaborative learning culture for our people and schools.

Coherent and capable organisation

We are committed to being responsive, efficient and effective by providing frameworks and timely services to drive operations and inform decision making across the organisation.

Productive partnerships

We are committed to developing and embedding education partnerships and collaborations locally, regionally and internationally that contribute to the economic and social development of the Territory.





GOAL 1: A GREAT START FOR CHILDREN

Successful learning starts from birth.

We are committed to working with families to support the early development of children to provide them with the best possible start in life so they begin school ready to learn.

Early years learning and development are critical to improving and maximising learning outcomes in the formal years of schooling. Families play a crucial role in actively supporting a child's learning and wellbeing. We will work together with families and agencies that deliver services such as health, to provide integrated services for children, and their families, before they start school. We will deliver quality early childhood education and care services and integrated and targeted support programs to improve child wellbeing and overall school readiness, particularly for remote and Indigenous children.

A range of strategies at the system, regional, school and community level have been identified to support children to have the best possible start in life and begin school ready to learn. In 2016 we will deliver a number of key actions against these strategies.

- 1 Drive quality improvement across early childhood education and care programs to enhance the learning outcomes for all Territory children from birth to eight years of age.
- 2 Deliver targeted early learning support programs for children from birth to three years of age that foster positive relationships with children and their families so that they are connected to learning.
- 3 Strengthen interagency partnerships to enhance integrated service delivery for birth to eight years that prioritise the needs of families and children.
- 4 Establish transition pathways and parent engagement in early childhood education and care programs to ensure children are well prepared to commence schooling.

- Develop and implement a coherent and cogent early years policy framework, 1 including a learning and development framework for 0-8 year olds and a curriculum framework for preschools that focuses on explicit teaching practices. (Strategy 1)
- 2 Commence second round assessment and rating of education and care services in the Northern Territory against the National Quality Standards. (Strategy 1)
- 3 Expand the delivery of Families as First Teachers to 25 sites, ensuring programs use evidence based literacy and child development approaches. (Strategy 2)
- 4 Provide integrated child and family services at schools in remote and urban communities across the Northern Territory that support transition to school and strengthen parent engagement in learning. (Strategy 3 and 4)





GOAL 2: EVERY STUDENT A SUCCESSFUL LEARNER

High expectations and an engaging learning environment in all schools enable students to thrive.

We are committed to creating opportunities and the environment for successful learning for every student in every school.

We foster the belief that every student can be a successful learner and we are committed to improving the educational outcomes of all students across all stages of schooling. To increase levels of achievement for all students we will have consistently high expectations for every student and put systems and targeted support in place to ensure that all students are connected to their school, attend regularly and are motivated and enabled to achieve. We will provide a high quality, integrated curriculum that students can identify with and meets their learning and achievement needs. We will use modern approaches and contemporary teaching resources enabled by technology to support service and program delivery. A significant focus of this goal includes working with families and other agencies to identify, monitor and provide support and services for students experiencing emotional, physical, and cognitive vulnerability.

A range of strategies at the system, regional, school and community level have been identified to support the successful learning of students. In 2016 we will deliver a number of key actions against these strategies.

- 1 Deliver quality teaching and a contemporary curriculum that is meaningful and differentiated to enable students to be successful learners through quality evidence based learning programs.
- 2 Create safe, positive and healthy learning environments that meet the needs of students and are connected to and informed by the expectations of families and the local community.
- 3 Support schools to develop positive relationships between students and staff. providing a school culture of inclusiveness and high expectations.
- 4 Work with families and relevant agencies to identify, monitor and support the learning needs of vulnerable, gifted, special needs and disengaged students.
- 5 Implement quality and evidence based programs for Indigenous students that align with the Indigenous Education Strategy.
- 6 Implement quality and evidence based programs for students in the middle years of schooling that align with the Work Like the Best Strategy.

- 1 Implement the Australian Curriculum in the Northern Territory, ensuring it is contextually relevant and meets the needs of all students. (Strategy 1 and 6)
- 2 Deliver priority Asian languages and cultural studies in schools, with continuity across the stages of schooling. (Strategy 1)
- 3 Continue implementation of Direct Instruction and explicit instruction of literacy and numeracy programs to up to 30 schools. (Strategy 2 and 5)
- Implement annual health screen checks for students in remote and very remote 4 schools. (Strategy 4 and 5)
- 5 Identify an evidence base to inform the relevant provision of learning programs for vulnerable and disengaged young people. (Strategy 4)
- Implement the Abilities Based Learning and Education Support (ABLES) 6 program for students in special schools and centres. (Strategy 4)
- 7 Expand girls' engagement programs to 13 schools. (Strategy 4 and 5)
- 8 Implement a school wide positive behaviour framework to provide a consistent approach to behaviour and wellbeing in schools. (Strategy 2, 3 and 6)
- 9 Provide targeted support to secondary school aged students to increase Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training completions. (Strategy 1, 3 and 5)
- 10 Establish employment pathways programs in identified schools. (Strategy 5 and 6)





GOAL 3: QUALITY LEADERS, QUALITY EDUCATORS, **QUALITY LEARNING**

Learning outcomes are maximised by high quality teachers and leaders.

We are committed to fostering a strong and collaborative learning culture for our people and schools.

Quality leadership, quality staff, and upholding high expectations and standards of professional practice at all levels in all schools is the foundation for a high performing and quality education system. Through strengthening the capability of our educators and school leaders, we will provide the highest quality teaching and learning for our students, particularly those in remote areas of the Northern Territory. Of critical importance is embedding a culture of exemplary and evidence based practice, developing our own teachers within the Northern Territory, particularly Indigenous teachers, and valuing and supporting our staff.

A range of strategies at the system, regional and school level have been identified to ensure we have quality leaders and educators to maximise the learning outcomes of students. In 2016 we will deliver a number of key actions against these strategies.

- 1 Enhance the capability of educational leadership and build cultures of evidence based practice and continuous improvement in our schools to maximise student outcomes.
- 2 Provide flexible and innovative options for service delivery to ensure all children have access to quality education and training programs.
- 3 Enhance the capability of educators and other school staff to provide the highest quality teaching, learning and training programs.
- 4 Strengthen the support for students, and their families, to transition between the stages of schooling and learning.
- 5 Deliver a high quality, focused and consistent education program in remote and very remote schools to improve education outcomes.

- 1 Continue the implementation of Visible Learning and relationships based learning in all Northern Territory schools. (Strategy 1, 2, 3 and 5)
- 2 Continue to implement early literacy assessment and progressive achievement testing in reading and mathematics in all schools from Transition to Year 10. (Strategy 1 and 3)
- 3 Deliver training to support better use of data to inform teacher practice and achieve improved student learning and school performance. (Strategy 1 and 3)
- 4 Develop capability of leaders, teachers and support staff through targeted professional learning opportunities delivered by the Centre for School Leadership and other institutions. (Strategy 1 and 3)
- 5 Implement moderation processes to clarify and confirm the teacher assessment of student learning, focused on primary and middle years of schooling. (Strategy 3)
- 6 The newly established Transition Support Unit will work with families to ensure very remote students are prepared for, and enrolled in appropriate secondary schooling options, and provide transition support to students completing secondary schooling away from home. (Strategy 2 and 4)
- Implement the mandated literacy and numeracy curriculum for Transition to 7 Year 6 in very remote schools. (Strategy 2 and 5)





GOAL 4: COHERENT AND CAPABLE ORGANISATION

Quality programs, services and systems are enabled by a coherent and capable organisation.

We are committed to being responsive, efficient and effective by providing frameworks and timely services to drive operations and inform decision making across the organisation.

We will develop and align quality services and systems that are focused on supporting the operations of schools more efficiently and effectively. We will use evidence based approaches to underpin the delivery of education services and an appropriate resource distribution model to support programs and schools. Developing innovative and flexible ways to deliver quality services, advice and support frontline service delivery within the resources available is essential for our organisation.

A range of strategies at the system, regional and school level have been identified to support the effective operations across the department. In 2016 we will deliver a number of key actions against these strategies.

- 1 Retain and recruit high quality staff and provide safe and healthy work environments.
- 2 Enhance the capability of our workforce and leadership across all areas of the agency, with a particular focus on developing Indigenous staff and succession planning.
- 3 Align and strengthen strategic and operational planning, monitoring, review and reporting processes to effectively and efficiently manage our available resources and deliver quality services and advice.
- 4 Effectively and efficiently use available data to monitor performance and inform practice for improvement.
- 5 Deliver quality advice, services and infrastructure that is flexible and agile to meet the growing needs of schools.

- 1 Implement the department's strategic workforce strategy and Indigenous workforce strategy to recruit and retain capable staff. (Strategy 1 and 2)
- Implement the new accountability and performance improvement framework 2 across our schools, regions and business areas. (Strategy 3)
- 3 Develop region and school effectiveness frameworks that drive continuous improvement. (Strategy 3)
- 4 Commence development of a data system which supports school effectiveness and is accessible by all schools and teachers. (Strategy 3 and 4)
- 5 Implement the new *Education Act*. (Strategy 5)
- 6 Refine and monitor global school budgets and support the needs of school leaders and administrators to implement. (Strategy 5)
- 7 Expand the roll out of the Independent Public Schools model to 15 schools. (Strategy 5)
- 8 Establish a new distance learning centre, special schools and early childhood and family centres in Darwin, Palmerston and Alice Springs, and continue to implement the approved infrastructure program as planned. (Strategy 5)





GOAL 5: PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Local, regional and international partnerships and collaborations will make a positive difference and progress the lives of our students and the community.

We are committed to developing and embedding education partnerships and collaborations locally, regionally and internationally that contribute to the economic and social development of the Territory.

We will support students to achieve better long-term employment and life outcomes that contribute to building a stronger society and economy in the Northern Territory. We will work collaboratively with school communities and the broader community to inform decision making on education delivery. We will continue to work in partnership with and establish productive partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders including, the non-government schools sector to support access to education and delivery of services. We will work with industry and employers to create structured pathways to employment, training and higher education for students when they leave school. We will partner with communities to build Indigenous cultural and language understanding to strengthen economic development. We will strengthen our relationships in the Asian region to boost economic development and advance the development of Northern Australia.

A range of strategies at the system, regional, school and community levels have been identified to develop and enhance collaborative partnerships and support the economic and social development of the Northern Territory. In 2016 we will deliver a number of key actions against these strategies.

- 1 Engage with families, communities and stakeholders to inform local decision making on education services delivery.
- 2 Build productive partnerships and collaborations with:
 - education and training providers, and industry; and
 - the non-government school sector, the Australian Government and other Northern Territory Government agencies.
- 3 Strengthen and formalise collaborative partnerships between schools and other institutions to share resources and best practice learning to improve our education system and student outcomes.
- 4 Support existing and grow new international education and training partnerships between the Northern Territory and the Asian region, building long-term relationships between educational institutions, teachers, students and researchers.
- Work in partnership with communities to build Indigenous cultural and language understandings to support local economic development.
- 6 Implement the Northern Territory International Education and Training Strategy.

- Support schools and early childhood providers to better engage with other government agencies and organisations to support children and student wellbeing, attendance and learning outcomes. (Strategy 1, 2 and 3)
- 2 Build partnerships with professional organisations and industry to support student access to high quality programs across science, technology, engineering and mathematics. (Strategy 1 and 3)
- 3 Strengthen the partnerships with training providers and industry partners to ensure nationally accredited vocational training is provided in regional and urban secondary schools. (Strategy 2)
- Work across government to implement an attendance strategy, Every Day Counts, to better target resources and services to address barriers to schooling and align with the Australian Government attendance strategies. (Strategy 1, 2 and 5)
- Support re-write of the *Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education Act*. (Strategy 2)
- Embed the new partnership arrangements between the Northern Territory Government and Charles Darwin University. (Strategy 2 and 3)
- 7 Continue to effectively engage with the Australian Government to achieve sustainable long term funding arrangements that maximise achievement of Northern Territory priorities. (Strategy 2 and 5)
- 8 Establish teacher exchange and sister school relationships in the Asian region, an English Language Centre in Dili, Timor Leste and continue to expand the delivery of international education and training services. (Strategy 4 and 6)

MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

As part of our commitment to achieving our vision we will measure our progress and work towards achieving agreed performance targets by December 2018.

MEASURE	2014 BASELINE	2018 TARGET		
Proportion of children enrolled in preschool the year before full time schooling for 600 hours per year				
Non-Indigenous students	94%	95%		
Indigenous students	97%	97%		
Proportion of students attending four days or more per week				
Non-Indigenous students	88%	91%		
Indigenous students	37%	57%		
Proportion of Year 3 students achieving at or above NMS in Numeracy				
Non-Indigenous students	91%	93%		
Indigenous students	52%	66%		
Proportion of Year 3 students achieving at or above NMS in Reading				
Non-Indigenous students	86%	90%		
Indigenous students	38%	56%		
Proportion of Year 5 students achieving at or above NMS in Numeracy				
Non-Indigenous students	89%	92%		
Indigenous students	38%	57%		
Proportion of Year 5 students achieving at or above NMS in Reading				
Non-Indigenous students	89%	94%		
Indigenous students	33%	55%		
Proportion of Year 7 students achieving at or above NMS in Numeracy				
Non-Indigenous students	91%	93%		
Indigenous students	51%	66%		
Proportion of Year 7 students achieving at or above NMS in Reading				
Non-Indigenous students	90%	93%		
Indigenous students	38%	56%		

MEASURE	2014 BASELINE	2018 TARGET	
Proportion of Year 9 students achieving at or above NMS in Numeracy			
Non-Indigenous students	91%	93%	
Indigenous students	50%	63%	
Proportion of Year 9 students achieving at or above NMS in Reading			
Non-Indigenous students	88%	92%	
Indigenous students	35%	54%	
Number of senior secondary students completing the Nor Certificate of Education and Training	rthern Territory	1	
Non-Indigenous students	764	788	
Indigenous students	121	200	
Proportion of senior secondary students completing the I Certificate of Education and Training	Northern Territ	ory	
Non-Indigenous students	79%	80%	
Indigenous students	38%	54%	
Number of senior secondary students attaining an Austra Admissions Rank score of 90 or above	lian Tertiary		
Non-Indigenous students	63	102	
Indigenous students	1	6	
Proportion of senior secondary students attaining an Aus Admissions Rank score of 90 or above	tralian Tertiary	′	
Non-Indigenous students	10%	16%	
Indigenous students	2%	6%	
Number of students who achieved one or more VET competencies	1 554	1 632	
Number of students who completed a Certificate I, II or III qualification	701	722	
Number of students enrolled in school-based apprenticeships or traineeships	151	156	

MONITORING OUR PERFORMANCE

Monitoring our performance

A quarterly report with performance measures for each goal will monitor our progress towards implementing the plan.

We will share progress reports across the department to track and monitor the effort and achievements made.

We will keep the community informed of our progress by publishing six-monthly report cards and the annual report on our website.

Reviewing our performance

We will review our performance annually and determine future key actions and targets based on our assessment of progress against our measures and targets.

Improving our performance

We will use findings of monitoring and reviewing to ensure performance is improved.

We will continue to review our processes and systems to ensure they are as effective and efficient as possible and are contributing to a coordinated effort and a culture of improvement across the department.

HOW WE WILL USE OUR PLAN

We will share our vision and our goals with students, parents, families, communities and our partners.

We will publish our progress on implementation and performance against our targets in our annual report.

We will use our plan to drive our planning and research, financial management and evaluation.

We will review our plan to respond to the needs of young people and schools across the Northern Territory, and in the context of broader social and economic government priorities.



