1. INTRODUCTION

All new and changed school names are approved by the Minister for Education.

These guidelines align with the Education Act and are to be used when creating new or changing existing school names and to support community consultation. They outline the conventions and process for naming government schools. A flowchart summary of this process is at Attachment A.

Use of standard naming conventions ensure that schools are named consistently. This facilitates record keeping and data management and avoids confusion for Northern Territory (NT) Police, Fire and Emergency Services when locating schools during emergencies.

2. DEFINITIONS

Approved names are those approved by the Minister for Education under section 15(5)(c) of the Education Act and are subsequently registered on the NT Place Names Register.

Function descriptor is the second part of a school’s name that indicates the type and scope of educational programs offered.

NT Place Names Register is the official register of place names in the NT administered by Lands and Planning.

School for this guideline means a government school.

Unique descriptor is the first part of a school’s name that provides a unique identity and distinguishes it from other schools in the NT. The unique descriptor may reflect the school’s location.
3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chief Executive will:
- advise the Minister about the name proposal and progress of the naming process.

Principals will:
- discuss initial naming proposal with School Operations (North or South) before commencing community consultation
- coordinate community consultation process in conjunction with the school representative body
- obtain in principle support of the proposed name from the Place Names Unit within Lands and Planning
- on completion of community consultation prepare a memorandum to the Director School Operations (North or South) to seek ministerial approval for creation of a new name or for changing an existing school name
- on approval of the new or changed name, arrange for related changes to signage, stationary and uniforms etc. as required and negotiated with School Operations (North or South).

School Operations North or South will:
- provide guidance to the school throughout the process
- recommend the function descriptor which reflects the approved educational services that the school provides
- apply for an instrument for the minister’s approval of the new name
- arrange Gazettal of the new name when ministerial approval is received
- send a copy of the Gazette notice to the Lands and Planning Place Names Unit to advise about the name change for inclusion in the Place Names Register
- coordinate advice of the name change to other sections of the department as appropriate.

School representative bodies will:
- work with the principal to initiate options for the proposed new name
- support the community consultation process in conjunction with the principal
- endorse the unique descriptor to be used in the school name.

4. GUIDELINES

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<th>ACTION</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
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<td><strong>New schools</strong></td>
<td>Principal and School Operations (North or South)</td>
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<td>A principal is appointed to a new school and works with School Operations (North or South) and parents of proposed new students to identify a name for the school.</td>
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<td><strong>Changing a school name</strong></td>
<td>Principal and School Operations (North or South)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Principals must first discuss the naming process with their relevant School Operations section (School Operations North or South).</td>
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</table>
### 1. Choosing a name
The principal works with the proposed parents of a new school or the school representative body of an existing school to initiate options for the new name. The proposed school name must comply with the [Northern Territory Rules of Nomenclature](http://www.education.nt.gov.au) and include:

- a **unique descriptor** and
- a **function descriptor**.

#### Unique descriptors
The geographic location of a school is often used as the unique descriptor. As a general rule, preference should be given to the original (or first published) geographic name of the area. However, other names may be considered provided they are consistent with the Northern Territory Rules of Nomenclature and have sufficient community support.

Schools that wish to use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander names should consult with traditional owners of the area and also follow the Geographical Names of Australasia [Guidelines for Consistent Use of Place Names](http://www.education.nt.gov.au). This document also includes Dual Naming Depiction Guidelines.

The unique descriptor should be determined through extensive consultations with all relevant stakeholders, including members of the school, the wider community and senior department staff.

#### Function descriptors
School Operations (North or South) provide advice and information about function descriptors.

The function descriptor should reflect the approved educational services provided by the school and be consistent with those used by other government schools in the NT. However, from time to time, use of alternative function descriptors may be necessary. In such cases, the principal should seek advice from their relevant School Operations (North or South) and the use of the alternative function descriptor must be endorsed by the relevant Executive Director.

Function descriptors currently in use by the department for naming schools are:

- School
- Primary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Senior College.
Specific function descriptors for naming special purpose schools may be used where appropriate. Common function descriptors for special purpose schools include:

- Special School
- Special Centre
- School of Distance Education
- School of Music.

2. **Consultation**

   School principals must be able to demonstrate that they have conducted extensive consultations with all relevant stakeholders, including members of the school, the wider community and senior department staff. They should also contact the Lands and Planning Place Names Unit via email (place.names@nt.gov.au) to check that the proposed school name meets the requirements of the Northern Territory Rules of Nomenclature.

3. **Formal application**

   The principal must prepare a memorandum to the Director School Operations (North or South) seeking approval of the proposed name under Section 15(5)(c) of the Education Act. The memorandum must include the following information:

   - the school’s geographical location including a map showing the location of the school site within the community or town, including lot or site number and street address
   - the reasons for choosing the particular name, including relevant history or significance of the name or, if applicable, the reasons for changing the school name
   - details of the consultation that has occurred with the school community, including information about any objections received about the name and how these have been taken into consideration
   - confirmation that the Place Names Unit has been consulted to ensure that the proposed name meets the Northern Territory Rules of Nomenclature requirements.

   School Operations (North or South) will ask the Office of Parliamentary Council to issue an instrument for the minister’s signature.

   On receipt of the instrument, School Operations will prepare a Ministerial seeking the Minister of Education’s approval of the proposed name.
### 4. Approval
On receipt of Ministerial approval School Operations arrange for the new name to be published in the government Gazette and they then send a copy of the Gazette notice to the Place Names Unit via email to place.names@nt.gov.au

### 5. Publication
The Place Names Unit adds the new name to the Place Names Register.

### 6. Implementation
School Operations communicates information to the rest of the department as appropriate.

The school negotiates with School Operations about requirements for changing signage, stationery, uniforms and the school representative body constitution etc. and then implements the required changes.