



Northern
Territory
Government

creating
success
together



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2013–2015

2015 Key Actions

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MESSAGE

Progress has been made towards fulfilling the goals set out in the Department of Education 2013–2015 Strategic Plan *Creating Success Together*.

One of the most significant achievements over the past year has been the review of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory. Recommendations of the review have guided the development of *A Share in the Future*, Indigenous Education Strategy 2015–2024. This 10-year strategy will focus the effort of schools on delivering clear and effective programs that are proven to make a difference for Indigenous students.

Completion rates in the Northern Territory Certificate of Education (NTCET) for Indigenous students have continued to improve, with the number of Indigenous students attaining NTCET increasing by 21 per cent in 2013 compared with 2012.



Ross Park Primary School, Alice Springs

The Northern Territory continues to foster its strong relationships with the Australian Government and other stakeholders in securing funding and partnerships that provide quality educational services for students. \$272.5 million in Australian Government funding was secured over four years under Students First, which will be used to support continuing improvements in education and school infrastructure.

A combined focus by both the Northern Territory and the Australian governments has resulted in strategies being implemented to improve student attendance. These strategies have seen some growth in student attendance for targeted school communities.

The coming year will involve implementation of some significant government policy initiatives which will continue to progress our strategic agenda and improve the quality of education for our students. These include:

- implementation of the Indigenous Education Strategy;
- implementation of the International Education and Training Strategy;
- reform of the *Education Act* in order to meet future needs of education services in the Northern Territory;
- introduction of greater school autonomy in government schools through global school budgets in all schools and establishment of the first six independent public schools; and
- strengthening middle schooling for Territory students.

The revised Strategic Plan refocuses our strategic direction by identifying key actions for 2015 to ensure that young people across the Northern Territory have access to a quality education services.



Ken Davies

OUR PURPOSE

The Department of Education delivers services to children and young people to maximise their educational outcomes, safety and wellbeing from their early years through to senior years of schooling. We work with a range of key stakeholders to achieve the best possible educational outcomes and pathways for children and young people in the Northern Territory.



Batchelor Area School

OUR CONTEXT



The Department of Education provides education services to over 33 000 school-aged children across the Northern Territory's 152 government schools, providing programs from the early years to post schooling pathways.

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 4300 dedicated staff working in our schools to support young Territorians to reach their potential. These professional staff working at the coalface are supported by an additional 770 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 achievement of high standards by all employees.

Respect

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

Innovation

We are adaptive, proactive and innovative as we work together in our schools and workplaces to find new approaches to meeting challenges in an ever-changing environment.

Diversity

We create inclusive work environments where people are valued for their cultures, experiences, skills, knowledge and capabilities. We provide culturally inclusive and responsive services.

Excellence

We have high expectations of our people, children and students to strive to achieve their best.

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. 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.



Jingili Primary School, Darwin

OUR GOALS



A great start for children

We are committed to working with families so children have the best possible start in life and 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 teachers, quality schools

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

Responsive services and systems

We are committed to providing accessible, timely services and systems to support effective operations and inform decision making.

Building productive partnerships

We are committed to partnerships and collaborations that support the economic and social development of the Territory.

A photograph of a female teacher with dark curly hair and glasses, wearing a black polka-dot shirt, leaning over a desk to assist a young student with red curly hair and glasses. The student is wearing a green shirt. They are both looking down at a book or paper on the desk. The teacher has a name tag that reads 'CAROL D. BERRY'.

GOAL 1

A GREAT START FOR CHILDREN

Successful learning starts from birth.

*We are committed to working with families
so children have the best possible start
in life and begin school ready to learn.*

GOAL 1: A GREAT START FOR CHILDREN

Early years learning and development are critical to improving and maximising learning outcomes in the formal years of schooling. We will work together with families and agencies that provide services such as health. We will deliver quality early childhood education 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 2015 we will deliver a number of key actions against these strategies.

STRATEGIES

1. Implement the National Quality Framework for quality early childhood education and care to continue to improve services across the Territory.
2. Deliver targeted early learning support programs for children from birth to three years of age and their families.
3. Provide quality preschool programs for all children in the year before full-time schooling.
4. Provide integrated approaches to service delivery that prioritise the needs of families and children.

KEY ACTIONS FOR 2015

1. Complete the assessment and rating of all education and care services under the National Quality Framework, including preschools.
2. Deliver a system-wide approach to the provision of early childhood education and care in schools and communities.
3. Implement a system-wide approach to curriculum and learning in preschools, and develop an assessment process to support this.
4. Continue to invest in targeted pre-literacy and numeracy strategies that improve school readiness and child development outcomes.



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.

GOAL 2: EVERY STUDENT A SUCCESSFUL LEARNER

This goal reflects our commitment to improving the educational outcomes of students across all stages of schooling. Central to this is ensuring that all students are connected to their school, attend regularly and are motivated and enabled to achieve. This will be done by providing a high quality, integrated curriculum that students can identify with and meets their learning and achievement needs. We will use modern approaches and 21st century teaching resources to support service and program delivery. A significant focus of this goal includes working with families and other agencies to 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 2015 we will deliver a number of key actions against these strategies.

STRATEGIES

1. Create safe, positive and healthy environments for students to learn and grow that are connected to, and informed by, the expectations of families and the local community.
 2. Foster an inclusive culture and high expectations of students who are learning in our schools.
 3. Deliver quality teaching and learning that is relevant, meaningful and differentiated for successful futures.
 4. Work with families and relevant agencies to monitor and support the learning needs of vulnerable students.
 5. Work with families and communities to close the educational achievement gap for Indigenous students.
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KEY ACTIONS FOR 2015

1. Commence the roll out of the Indigenous Education Strategy 2015–2024, *A Share in the Future*.
2. Implement mandated and consistent system-wide diagnostic tools to measure age benchmarks in literacy and numeracy in the primary and middle years.
3. Continue to implement the Australian curriculum in all schools in a way that is relevant and meets the needs of all students.
4. Align the Australian Government and Northern Territory Government attendance strategies, and work with students, families and communities to drive improvement in attendance.
5. Identify priority Asian languages to be delivered in Northern Territory government schools.
6. Balance and realign resources to improve senior secondary student outcomes.

GOAL 3

QUALITY LEADERS, QUALITY TEACHERS, QUALITY SCHOOLS

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.



GOAL 3: QUALITY LEADERS, QUALITY TEACHERS, QUALITY SCHOOLS

A high performing education system relies on quality leadership, quality staff, and upholding high expectations and standards of professional practice at all levels in all schools. Through strengthening the capacity of our classroom teachers 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 practice, developing our own teachers within the Territory, particularly Indigenous teachers, and valuing our staff. A range of strategies at the system, regional and school level have been identified to ensure we have quality leaders, teachers and schools working to maximise the learning outcomes of students. In 2015 we will deliver a number of key actions against these strategies.

STRATEGIES

1. Strengthen capacity in educational leadership across our schools to maximise student outcomes.
 2. Build cultures of evidence-based practice and continuous improvement in our schools.
 3. Provide flexible and innovative options for service delivery to ensure all children have access to quality education and training programs.
 4. Strengthen the capacity of classroom teachers and trainers to provide the highest quality teaching, learning and training programs.
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KEY ACTIONS FOR 2015

1. Implement Visible Learning to build a shared language across schools and create a culture of improvement and success for all students.
2. Implement a revised school review process that provides consistency across schools and supports school improvement.
3. Provide high quality data, reporting and analysis on staffing and school achievement that can inform decision making and continuous improvement at school, region and system levels.
4. Commence a revised schooling classification model that defines education provision in schools.
5. Provide innovative service delivery models to enable access to quality education across the Territory to support students.
6. Strengthen the quality of education for middle and senior years students.
7. Target principals, assistant principals and emerging school leaders to participate in selected high level leadership programs.

GOAL 4

RESPONSIVE SERVICES AND SYSTEMS

Quality programs and services are enabled by responsive and sustainable systems.

We are committed to providing accessible and timely services and systems to support effective operations and inform decision making.

GOAL 4: RESPONSIVE SERVICES AND SYSTEMS

We need connected and aligned 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 ways to 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 2015 we will deliver a number of key actions against these strategies.

STRATEGIES

1. Recruit and retain high quality staff and provide safe and healthy work environments.
 2. Build the capacity of our workforce and leadership across all areas of the agency, with a particular focus on developing Indigenous staff.
 3. Align and strengthen strategic and operational planning, monitoring and reporting to promote transparent and accountable practices.
 4. Effectively and efficiently manage our resources through strong leadership, greater autonomy and responsible financial management to deliver quality services within agreed budgets and within a regional structure.
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KEY ACTIONS FOR 2015

1. Implement and monitor greater school autonomy through a global schools funding model and independent public schools to provide greater local control in decision making.
2. Proceed with the construction of new school facilities, including a new Northern Territory Open Education Centre and a new Henbury School, and implement the approved infrastructure program as planned.
3. Implement a strategic workforce planning framework to be supported by local and school level workforce plans, together with contemporary recruitment systems which will ensure we employ skilled and experienced people, where and when they are needed.
4. Implement a workforce and career development strategy which builds the capability of our employees and creates career opportunities, particularly for Indigenous employees.
5. Finalise the reform of the *Education Act* to meet the future needs of education services in the Northern Territory.
6. Improve the quality and currency of operational policy advice to schools and business units in line with the departmental policy framework.



GOAL 5

BUILDING PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

*Local and regional
partnerships
will progress the
Territory's education
and economic
reform agenda.*

*We are committed
to partnerships
and collaborations
that support
the economic and
social development
of the Territory.*

GOAL 5: BUILDING PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

We will support students to achieve better long-term employment and life outcomes that contribute to building a stronger social and economic future in the Northern Territory. We will work with school communities to develop governance that supports greater operational flexibility; supports access to education by working with the non-government schools sector to deliver services; creates partnerships with industry and employers that facilitate the transition of young people into work or further education when they leave school; creates partnerships with Asia that underpin economic development and collaboration with our Asian neighbours; and builds Indigenous cultural and language understandings to underpin economic development.

A range of strategies at the system, regional, school and community levels have been identified to enhance collaborative partnerships and support the economic and social development of the Northern Territory. In 2015 we will deliver a number of key actions against these strategies.

STRATEGIES

1. In partnership with communities and stakeholders, determine appropriate options for school governance arrangements.
2. Build productive partnerships and collaborations with:
 - education and training providers, and industry to create structured pathways to employment, training and higher education for students;
 - education providers in our region to share resources and learning to improve our education systems; and
 - the non-government schools sector, the Australian Government and other Northern Territory Government agencies.
3. Create opportunities to share and build Asian cultural understandings and language expertise to support greater regional economic collaboration.
4. Work in partnership with communities to build Indigenous cultural and language understandings to support local economic development.

KEY ACTIONS FOR 2015

1. Implement the 10-year Northern Territory International Education and Training Strategy.
2. Continue to strengthen the relationship with the Australian Government with strategic intent to secure long-term funding arrangements for education in the Northern Territory.
3. Work with the Australian Government and industry groups to implement the national Vocational Education and Training reforms for school students.
4. Continue to partner with Charles Darwin University and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education to provide education and training pathways for students and our staff.

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 2015.

Measure	2012 Baseline	2015 Target
Proportion of students attending four days per week or more		
Non-Indigenous students	86%	88%
Indigenous students	37%	42%
Proportion of Year 3 students achieving at or above NMS in Numeracy		
Non-Indigenous students	90%	92%
Indigenous students	48%	54%
Proportion of Year 3 students achieving at or above NMS in Reading		
Non-Indigenous students	89%	91%
Indigenous students	50%	56%
Proportion of Year 5 students achieving at or above NMS in Numeracy		
Non-Indigenous students	88%	90%
Indigenous students	35%	41%
Proportion of Year 5 students achieving at or above NMS in Reading		
Non-Indigenous students	85%	87%
Indigenous students	28%	34%

Measure	2012 Baseline	2015 Target
Proportion of Year 7 students achieving at or above NMS in Numeracy		
Non-Indigenous students	89%	91%
Indigenous students	47%	53%
Proportion of Year 7 students achieving at or above NMS in Reading		
Non-Indigenous students	87%	89%
Indigenous students	44%	50%
Proportion of Year 9 students achieving at or above NMS in Numeracy		
Non-Indigenous students	90%	92%
Indigenous students	54%	60%
Proportion of Year 9 students achieving at or above NMS in Reading		
Non-Indigenous students	84%	86%
Indigenous students	37%	43%
Number of senior secondary students completing the Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training		
Non-Indigenous students	764	824
Indigenous students	111	129
Proportion of senior secondary students completing the Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training		
Non-Indigenous students	77%	83%
Indigenous students	33%	39%

MONITORING OUR PERFORMANCE

Monitoring our performance

A quarterly report with performance measures and targets 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 and commit to publishing progress 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, in the context of broader social and economic government priorities.



Acacia Hill Special School, Alice Springs



Ross Park Primary School, Alice Springs

